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ABSTRACT

Documented and evaluated in this report is the minischool approach used by the Advancement School to improve the quality of education in two Philadelphia School District junior high schools. Background information and the history of each school is provided to put into perspective the factors dealt with in this extension program. Considerable attention is given to the development of relationships between the administrative teams of the Advancement School and each of the two schools. Specific topics covered are: the instructional programs developed at each school; team functioning; and the effects of the minischools on the students. Problems in the junior high schools of Philadelphia in general, such as discipline and teaching approaches, are analyzed. The role of the Advancement School as an external change agent in dealing with these problems is discussed. In addition, the minischool program as one approach to change in junior high schools is examined. Appendices present data collected and a listing of additional literature on the Advancement School's external program. (EB)

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CHANGE IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS:
Two Case Studies

by

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April, 1972

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
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Pennsylvania Advancement School
Fifth and Luzerne Streets
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19140

Established in Philadelphia in September, 1967, the Pennsylvania Advancement School is a non-profit corporation under contract to the School District of Philadelphia. Its funding is from Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and from operating funds of the School District of Philadelphia. In addition, funds from the Education Professions Development Act and from private foundations have been used to support smaller projects initiated by the school.

On two floors of a converted warehouse, a school is operated for about 360 students, taken from the 6th, 7th and 8th grades of Philadelphia public and parochial schools. During the first two years of the Advancement School, boys remained for a 14-week term; currently the students attend for an entire school year.

The Advancement School is more than just a "school"; its program also includes curriculum development, teacher and paraprofessional training and staff development activities. In its external staff development program, PAS works closely with groups of teachers and administrators in five Philadelphia junior high schools, helping each to plan and operate semi-autonomous units called "minischools." The Advancement School conducts an intensive summer program for these groups and several PAS staff members are assigned full-time to help the minischools during the school year.

Further information on the Pennsylvania Advancement School may be obtained by writing the school (5th and Luzerne Streets, Philadelphia, 19140) or by telephoning (BA 6-4653).

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INTRODUCTION

The External Program of the Pennsylvania Advancement School (PAS) was begun in 1968 in an effort to initiate changes within some of Philadelphia's junior high schools. During the subsequent three years, the program shifted and grew, changing in response to the needs of the school district personnel it served. By the summer of 1970, the external program had evolved to be one with primary emphasis on teams of teachers working together in "minischools" both within and outside the regular junior high school building.

Through its work in the junior high schools, the Advancement School staff involved in the external program had come to believe in the advantages of groups of teachers working together to plan their own programs. The one general goal the Advancement School had continuously espoused was more effective and humane education for children. To that end, the School provided a summer program which allowed the minischool teams of teachers to learn to work together, to participate in curriculum workshops, and to make plans for a coordinated fall program.

During the school year the Advancement School provided continued help in several ways: 1) a PAS staff member for each team who served as a full-time consultant/facilitator in the minischool; 2) curriculum materials available for teachers who wanted them; 3) extra staff development time for the teams on some Saturdays and other days during the year; and 4) the added support provided by their being part of a network of minischools connected to the

Advancement School through the consultants.[1] It was felt that with this type of help and support, teachers could plan programs for children appropriate to their respective school situations.

It was not until the Spring of 1970 that the Advancement School decided to use this model---minischools with assigned full-time consultants---as the focus for its entire external program.[2] Prior to 1970, there had been little longitudinal research done on the external program because the program had not been stable enough to enable a long-range research study to be designed and carried out. The clarity of the 1970 program made such a research design not only feasible but desirable as well. In conjunction with the External Coordinator and the Director of Research and Planning, the writer designed a research study aimed at evaluating and documenting the Advancement School's work with two of the six minischools.[3] (The selection of these two schools for study is described in Chapter 1.)

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[1] In addition to the consultants, the external staff consisted of an external coordinator who oversaw the entire program, a secretary available to help the teams compile materials and order supplies, and some other Advancement School personnel in specialized areas (e.g., media, research) who were available for specific needs of the teams.

[2] For a more complete description of the evolution of the Advancement School's external program, the reader is referred to several other reports: Report on the 1968 Summer Workshop; Saturday Workshop Report; Participants' Reactions to the Summer, 1969 Workshop; External Staff Development, 1968-70; Report on the 1970 Summer Workshop.

[3] There were three different types of minischools in operation during 1970-71, although this report covers only two. One minischool model discussed in the report was located outside the main junior high school building, in a self-contained annex one block away. In the second minischool model the team teachers were rostered to the same sections of students and to a joint meeting time, but their classrooms were spread around the building. (The third type of minischool not included in this report was actually the dominant type in the PAS-affiliated schools: teachers rostered together in adjacent classrooms within the regular school building.)

The study relies on a variety of data, from pre-post administrations of standardized tests to meeting observations and the reporting of critical events within the schools. Principals, teachers, and students were interviewed at several times during the year. Student attitudes were probed by a variety of methods and their academic progress was charted through reading tests and the Iowa Achievement Tests. Team meetings were attended and assessed; classrooms were visited and systematically observed. This report represents the most comprehensive analysis of the Advancement School's work with teachers in the public schools.

The report consists of two major parts. The first part is an historical account of the development of the two teams. Their histories are contrasting: one was an ambitious program which went through many near disasters before emerging with a well-run, exciting program at the end of the year. The other was a much less ambitious program, one which fell victim to many of the pressures and problems of an urban junior high school. The two experiences, being so different in approach and in outcome, provide valuable learning material for anyone interested in the team approach in the junior high school.

Part II of the report is organized topically to provide more opportunity for contrast between the two different approaches for running a minischool. Topics covered are: 1) The instructional programs; 2) Team functioning; and 3) The effects of the minischools on the students.

Each section is dependent on the other. The historical section does not discuss the specific topics in sufficient depth to provide the reader with an adequate understanding of these important areas. Conversely, the topical section is nearly meaningless unless the reader has a clear understanding of the school context and the developmental history of each team.

The final section of the report is a chapter which analyzes in depth the problems of junior high schools in Philadelphia and discusses the role of an external "change agent" such as the Advancement School in addressing those problems. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the minischool program as a potentially valuable approach for improving the quality of education in Philadelphia's junior high schools.

This report is intended primarily for people interested in the education of the junior high school-aged child, an area generally neglected in public school education. It will also be of interest to those for whom the minischool approach appears a possible alternative to the usual school organization. On a more general level, however, we feel that the information presented here about students and teachers---and their interactions in schools---has a significance which goes beyond the particular organization or student population it covers.

PART ONE

HISTORY OF THE TWO TEAMS

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE TWO SCHOOLS

Early Negotiations

The Advancement School's involvement with the two schools discussed in this report stemmed from its earlier work (in 1969-1970) with the sixth-grade of a feeder elementary school. Working with the two junior high schools which the graduated sixth-graders entered was a logical extension of the Advancement School's program. In addition to providing a more continuous transition between elementary and junior high school for the students, working with the two additional schools could help develop a "cluster" of schools in the area, with the Advancement School serving as a resource agency and facilitator of inter-school cooperation and planning.

The elementary school principal and the director of the Advancement School's external program suggested a "cluster" relationship with PAS to the two junior high school principals in the Spring of 1970; the reaction was generally positive, although there were important differences in the two responses.

According to the notes of Joseph Prusan, who was then the Advancement School's external coordinator, the principal of Jefferson Junior High School[4] "...was positive from the beginning. He was more open and more willing to work with us. Part of this was due to his own personality and part was due to the fact that the previous summer we took two administrative interns from a program he was running. These interns were positive about PAS and relayed this feeling to him. Again, the clincher was the help (PAS could provide), including summer participation for the minischool people and the Advancement School person full-time at (Jefferson)."[5]

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[4] The real names of the two junior high schools will not be used in this report. We do not intend to draw attention to any particular school; rather, because we believe that the information presented is generalizable to most urban junior high schools, we have given the schools discussed in this report the fictional names Jefferson and North.

The principal of North, according to Prusan, was more cautious about entering into a relationship with the Advancement School. As the latter part of this chapter will demonstrate, North Junior High School was a school in trouble. There less than a year, the principal had inherited a school in a rapidly-changing neighborhood, with high teacher turnover, emerging gang problems and racial tensions.

Unlike the Jefferson principal, the North principal had not had previous direct contact with the Advancement School. He wanted to be sure that an Advancement School program would benefit the students; given all the other elements of instability and tension in his school, he could not afford to take chances with an unknown and risky venture.

Prusan pointed to several factors which he believed eventually convinced North's principal:

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[5] The principal of Jefferson during these initial negotiations resigned that spring. At the end of the summer, the vice-principal of Jefferson, cognizant of all the early planning, was appointed principal.

1. The School District had agreed to rent classrooms in a neighboring synagogue to relieve overcrowding in the school. The principal felt that the Advancement School could help him and his teachers make good use of the new facility.
2. He was attracted by the amount of help the Advancement School would provide, in the way of the summer program for his teachers and the full-time consultant.
3. The principal of the elementary school was very positive about the Advancement School's program in his building. His conversations with North's principal served to remove some of the latter's reservations.

Throughout these negotiations, there was little substantive discussion about the Advancement School's program. According to Prusan, neither the principals, the teachers who were selected for the teams nor the district superintendent who gave approval for the schools' involvement had a very concrete sense of what the program would entail.

The important point in this brief history is that the Advancement School's relationship with these two schools began for reasons which were primarily extrinsic in nature: the fact that both schools received sixth-graders from the PAS-affiliated elementary school, the material advantages (e.g., staff development time, on-site PAS consultant) which the Advancement School could provide; the availability of an additional facility at North.

Description of the Schools

North and Jefferson are located within the same administrative district of the Philadelphia School District and serve contiguous attendance areas. Both are imposing, four-story buildings of tan brick, built around forty years ago; each was intended to house about 1400 students.

In some ways the schools are very similar. As the data in Table I show, the student enrollment, average class size and attendance percentages are remarkably alike. The mean Composite scores on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills were higher for North; similarly, official school district records show North having considerably more books than Jefferson in the respective schools' library/instructional materials centers.

	North	Jefferson
Total enrollment (1970)	1698	1736
Average class size (Oct., 1970)	32.4	32.2
Percentage of pupils attending (1970)	83%	85%
Composite Iowa Test Scores (Spring, 1971)		
Mean for 7th grade (grade equivalent)	5.7	5.5
Mean for 8th grade (grade equivalent)	7.0	6.3
Number of books in library/ IMC	15,765	10,154

TABLE I

SELECTED STATISTICS ABOUT NORTH AND JEFFERSON

(Taken from official records of the Philadelphia School District)

Both North and Jefferson are located in areas which are primarily residential. (Within two blocks of Jefferson, however, there is a deteriorating business section.) Whereas the homes in the Jefferson area are mostly rowhouses, there are tree-lined streets surrounding North Junior High School with predominantly single-family or "twin" homes.

Although both schools now serve a mostly black student population, there are important differences between them: the percentage of black students at Jefferson has been relatively stable over the past ten years; at North, however, recent changes in the racial composition of the neighborhood have been reflected in a rapid increase in the percentage of black students. The table below, based on official reports published by the School District of Philadelphia, shows the differences between the two schools in the percentage of black students enrolled since 1959.

	Year											
	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
North	2%	4	8	11	14	21	42	50	60	73	79	88
Jefferson	88%	92	94	96	95	96	97	99	99	99	99+	99+

TABLE II

PERCENTAGE OF BLACK STUDENTS AT NORTH AND JEFFERSON
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS
1959-1970

Jefferson is designated by the School District as a school eligible for federal Title I funds, indicating that a substantial number of its students come from low-income families. North has not been a Title I school, although school district officials feel that an analysis of the 1970 census data might now reveal enough low-income families in its attendance area to qualify the school for the additional funds.

The rapid change in the North community was reflected within the school. According to a school district administrator familiar with the recent history of North, "the school suffered tremendously during this period of change. There was high teacher turnover and the two previous principals were unable to maintain morale and continuity."[6]

The current North principal assumed his position at the start of the 1969-70 school year, inheriting a situation which the above-mentioned school district source termed "one of the worst in the city."

In 1969, 44% of the North teachers had been teaching less than two years, compared with 25% of the Jefferson faculty with less than two years experience. In addition the racial composition of the North faculty had not changed much, despite the considerable changes in the student body. According to school district records, between 1965 and 1968 the percentage of black students in the school rose from 42% to 73%; yet the percentage of black teachers at North was 17% in both years.[7] (For the 1970-71 school year, the records indicate that 31% of the North faculty was black, compared with 62% of the Jefferson teachers.)

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[6] Interview notes are on file at the Pennsylvania Advancement School.

[7] According to the same records, even as far back as 1965, over two-thirds of the Jefferson faculty was black.

The two schools, then, despite some superficial similarities, turned out to be very different places. Jefferson had a veteran staff (mostly black), high morale and a relatively-stable and proud tradition. North, on the other hand, had experienced a period of tremendous instability, with high teacher (and administrator) turnover and a consequent deterioration in morale. It seemed likely that the Advancement School's role would be different in each of the schools.

Selection of Team Members

Selection of the members of the teams was basically similar in both North and Jefferson. In each, an announcement was made in the spring describing the PAS summer program, the amount of pay, and the fact that participants would be involved in a minischool structure the following year. The principals in both schools first asked for volunteers from the faculty; additionally invitations were made to specific members of the faculty who the principals felt would make good team members. The final decisions on the composition of the teams were made on a seniority basis among those who volunteered or were asked to volunteer.

Team members volunteered for a variety of reasons, few of which concerned the program or the Advancement School. Never having been affiliated with either school before, the Advancement School was new to most team members. The idea of a minischool structure was likewise foreign to them. Several later admitted they had volunteered for the money and the chance for summer employment; others were dissatisfied with their present teaching situation and wanted to try something different and possibly exciting. This latter reason was especially potent for those who volunteered for the annex at North--the desire to get out of the main building and into a new situation was strong.

It is important to note that the teams were not composed of veteran teachers. All the team members were young (the most experienced having taught for four years) and the only distinction between them and the rest of the faculty was their willingness to participate in a new program. That willingness had its roots in both good and bad teaching experiences.

Each team met several times during the spring with Joe Prusan, then the external coordinator from the Advancement School; and it was in those meetings that the concept of a minischool was first made clear to the teachers. As Prusan noted after those meetings, "Neither group was really a group. Individuals hardly knew each other, they were uncertain about expectations and did not know what a minischool was supposed to be. But they had many things going for them. They liked the students, they were anxious to learn, wanted new ideas, had been identified as successful teachers and were generally positive about the enterprise."

From these similar beginnings, however, the teams went on to very different experiences during the summer and fall.

The potential for what each team could do was determined in large part by two aspects of their situations: the physical arrangement of the classrooms and the amount of teaching and meeting time they had rostered together. Because the North team was in an annex and not restricted by the school-wide roster, the teachers had many more options than those available to the Jefferson team. On the other hand, the North team also had to be concerned with a myriad of administrative problems created by their having responsibility for their own building.

Any assessment of the effectiveness of the two teams must take into account the respective settings within which each operated. The key question then becomes: how close did each team come toward realizing its potential within its own setting? The next two chapters present general overviews of the experiences of each team, documentary accounts of the problems and successes each met in trying to realize its potential.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORY OF NORTH

Summer Experience

The Team

The North team was a young, personable, enthusiastic group, all of whom had been active in North the year before. All had taught at North for two years and some had more teaching experience. Edith was the English teacher;[8] she had majored in speech and had wanted to teach speech at the high school level but was assigned to teach English in the junior high. White, the wife of a theological student, she classified herself a traditional teacher in terms of what she expected from students in the classroom.

She had had a difficult first year teaching, although her second year had gone better. She said that during her first year of teaching she volunteered to work in the roster room to relieve herself of some of the problems she was encountering in the classroom. The second year she would have preferred just to teach but was given increased roster room duties. Through these roster room experiences, she had developed good relations with the secretaries and gained working knowledge of the roster, which proved a valuable asset for the team.

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[8] The real names of the personnel discussed in this report will not be used. For the convenience of the reader, names have been chosen so that the first letters correspond to the subject areas the individuals teach: Edith is the English teacher, Mike is the math teacher, Sue is the science teacher, and Hal is the history (or social studies) teacher.

From the beginning she took on the role of synthesizer for the team. In meetings it was she who was likely to bring closure to a discussion by writing down the options or by pressing for a decision. She volunteered for much of the administrative detail; for example, drawing out their roster as they planned it or listing materials they wanted to order.

The science teacher (Sue) was the only black member of the team; she was also young and somewhat traditional in approach but she had been much more successful in her teaching. Because she had been a "floating teacher" the year before with one class in the lunchroom, she had become depressed about teaching in a junior high school generally. The experience had disillusioned her about teaching and she had volunteered for the annex because it was new and challenging, and "most of all it was interesting." She was the quietest member of the group in their meetings, from the beginning taking a more passive role.

Mike, the math teacher, had taught for three years. Like Edith, he had taken an active part in North, having been appointed lunchroom supervisor before he volunteered for the annex. His primary reason for volunteering was the "money and for the summer work for a month." From the outset he was looked upon, at least by the principal at North, as the most responsible member of the group. In fact, he was appointed by the principal to be the spokesman for the annex at the main building.

The "radical" member of the group, Hal, was the social studies teacher. He was viewed as a radical by both the faculty at North and the principal, and he seemed to enjoy playing that role with the group. He was the teacher who was most likely to introduce philosophical considerations in the midst of practical decisions; he would hold out for the options which allowed teachers and students the most freedom. His teaching experiences at North had been mixed; he had not liked the atmosphere in either his classes or in the school as a whole, although he had a good relationship with the students. Had he not volunteered for the annex, he would have been coordinator for the 7th grade student council during the year.

The principal of North spent part of the summer with the team. He was relatively new at North though very experienced in the school system. As he put it, he had come to PAS in "desperation": "I'm the principal of the only junior high school in this district that draws no federal funding, and we need it. And there were very few things happening other than attempts at retaining the traditional organization that was. Now I would love to have had the traditional organization that was if that were feasible; it's not feasible." (Taped Interview, May, 1971). An important part of the summer was the resolution of his role in relationship to the group: who administers an annex which is separate from the main building? Who is responsible?

The question of responsibility for the annex was made more difficult by the fact that the PAS consultant was not with the group during the summer. She had been hired but could not join the group until September. In the meantime, one PAS staff member who was leaving at the end of the summer took over on an interim basis.

The summer consultant brought to the group a perspective firmly rooted in group process and interpersonal understanding. He believed in pushing the members of the group toward greater understanding of how they worked together. (His interests coincided with the team's, who, as Joe Prusan noted, "had more insight into the difficulties involved in becoming a group and were more willing from the beginning to work on this problem.")

Expectations for the Summer

> "I guess in the beginning I thought that PAS had a pat program and we'd try it and see what happens, but that's not the way it works--just a pat program in each of the subject areas--but that's what I thought."
>
> Sue, Taped Interview[9]
> March, 1971

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[9] Material for this report is taken from many different sources. Through Chapters Two and Three sources will be cited as follows:

Taped Interview, with Date and Person speaking: interviews conducted and tape-recorded by the writer at various times during the year with both teachers and principals.
Taped Observations, with Date: material dictated by the writer and transcribed at various times during the year concerning information and reactions to the program.
Written Observations, with Date: material written by the writer concerning her impressions of the program.
Observation Notes, with Date: material written by the writer following each meeting attended, assessing the interaction and productivity of the team at the meeting.
Written Questionnaire, with Date and Person: material written by the participants in response to questionnaires administered to the teams at various times during the year.

For a detailed description of data collected and utilized in this report, please refer to Appendix A.

The expectation of a "pat program" was in fact what the teachers shared in the beginning of the summer, pat programs in subject areas and pat programs in how to run an annex as well. In fact, the Advancement School had had experience with only one annex previous to this one, and had had little experience in attempting to fit innovative curricula into an annex arrangement. The team's dependence on the Advancement School created problems for it later, some of which could have been anticipated during the summer. Their belief in the Advancement School led each of them (except for Sue) to adopt, without reflection, totally new approaches to teaching the following year. On top of the burdens entailed in practically running their own school, the teachers chose to change their individual teaching styles and the content of their classes as well.

Referring to the influence of the summer program on the team, the principal later noted, "I think they were spoiled at the Advancement School in one regard. They were watching people who either by experience or temperament or planning, had mastered their thing; and the strong desire of these four teachers to gain new ideas--not necessarily to replicate, but to derive new approaches--was so intense that they were going to start it from day one." (Taped Interview, October, 1970)

His expectations were not as high as the team's; he was much more cautious in his outlook on PAS and the summer experience. Thinking back to the way he felt then, the principal said,

> My commitment which I made clear to the teachers was this: I don't know whether what they're going to offer us at PAS is good, bad or indifferent. My commitment is that we go in and give it a fair shot. That, no matter how we react to it at first, we're going to try it. So that if we come out as opponents of what's being done there, it would be opponents who will have validity, not opponents who came in with a bias in advance and said this can't work.
>
> Taped Interview
> May, 1971

Working Out Leadership Roles

Aside from the curriculum workshops, most of the teachers' time that summer was spent in planning the program for the fall and in developing ways of working as a team. The teachers seemed to fall into natural and easy patterns of relating to each other.

During the first week of the summer program (in the first group project the team worked on), an observer noted high "involvement," "little conflict" and little sense of "competition or judgment." Edith was seen as the "synthesizer" and Mike the "organizer" even at that early date. Each seemed to respect the other members of the team and with little effort they became a well-functioning group. Their relationship with the principal, however, was not an automatic one but had to be worked out over the summer.

The four teachers were to be in a building with no supervisory personnel, with none of the constraints of the larger junior high to insure that they came to work on time or taught all their classes. It was unclear at the beginning whether this fact would remove them entirely from the jurisdiction of the principal and other administrators in the main building, whether it made them responsible primarily to the Advancement School, or whether some new administrative arrangement had to be developed. Moreover, it was not clear what the relationship between the principal and the Advancement School was going to be.

The principal seemed to feel strongly that he needed to appoint an administrator from the team. This person would be the spokesman for the team at the main building and would act almost as the principal's "man" on the team. On the other hand, one of the team's earliest decisions was that they wanted no designated leader, that they were going to share leadership. The principal persisted and named Mike as administrator of the team. Rather than fighting him, the team looked on the appointment with good humor and did not allow it to affect substantially their ongoing working relationships. (Mike diminished the importance of the appointment considerably by creating an incident that showed the principal that he was much more "radical" than he appeared on the surface.)

The triangular interaction of the Advancement School, the principal and the team had its stormy moments during the summer. The group made the decision that they wanted to spend the last week of planning time actually in the annex building, where their planning would be more realistic. The principal opposed this decision: the team would be away from the supervision of the Advancement School and he was not going to be in town for that last week; the team would be entirely on its own. The team regarded this decision as an important one--they went to the director of the summer program at PAS, received his permission, and then told their principal he had been "overruled." This led to an angry confrontation between Joe Prusan and the principal concerning whose authority was greater and what the lines of authority were. Although the question was not thoroughly resolved, the team did spend that last week in the annex building doing their planning.

By the end of the summer, the relationship between the principal and the group was well-established and had become a fairly warm one. As he said later: "I think I came through to them as a human being. I think maybe I did before, at least I hope I did in this mass situation (the junior high school), but I think they got to know me on a personal level. It wound up with the group of teachers coming to my home. This is something I'd not had before."

Taped Interview
October, 1970

Goals

The North team worked out the goals for their program in some detail. As the following list indicates, they subdivided general goals into the specifics of what they intended. This was an admirable step, one often not reached by groups, who tend to select several key phrases for their goals, think that each team member understands what is meant, and then proceed with the planning. This group avoided that particular pitfall but did fail to take into account the implications of the goals when taken altogether.

GOALS OF NORTH ANNEX
July 24, 1970

I. To develop a positive self-image for each child

- A. Child as a person
    1. feeling that he is not dumb
    2. instill confidence in self
    3. feeling of accomplishment for child
    4. understanding of his emotions
    5. closeness to teacher; teacher as friend
    6. be open for constructive criticism
    7. freedom/ability to admit mistakes
    8. increase awareness of total environment; physical and social
    9. make him not afraid to question, speak out
    10. develop communication of ideas
- B. Child as a member of a group
    1. sense of belonging; feeling of interaction
    2. develop trust in self and others
    3. instill confidence in others
    4. ability to recognize differences in other people and be open for interaction
    5. able to question and speak out
    6. communication of ideas
    7. feeling that he has something to offer/give to group
    8. increase awareness of total environment
- C. Child as a member of society
    1. build bridge between annex and North
    2. feeling that he has something to give to society
    3. communication of ideas
    4. not afraid to question, speak out
    5. increase awareness of total environment

II. To improve reading skills

- A. Improve reading level of child
- B. Five-year plan participation - District #4
- C. Raise scores in Iowa Test
- D. Interdisciplinary concentration
- E. Use of Science Research Associates (SRA) materials and other relevant ones
- F. Encourage free reading
- G. Work with the reading center at North
- H. Special attention to non-readers
- I. Use school library and public library
- J. Encourage critical thinking: fact vs. opinion

III. To promote and encourage community involvement

   A. Get parents into the annex as observers, participants and workers
   B. Make them feel a part of family
   C. Inform community of what is happening through local media
   D. Weekly news column
   E. Parental and faculty newsletter
   F. Use of parents and students for administrivia, e.g., phone
   G. Field trips into community (awareness of environment)
   H. Field trips into North
   I. Check out local businesses for junk for school
   J. Involve parents in activities in planned curriculum, e.g., writing activities
   K. Call parents prior to opening of school to welcome them to our program

IV. To involve kids in own education

   A. Allow them to make decisions about curriculum
   B. Encourage outside research projects
   C. Use of contract system
   D. Free reading
   E. Discard useless curriculum
   F. Make curriculum relevant to child's total environment
   G. Affective, dramatic approaches

The proposed goals were ambitious and reflected the team's concern for developing a truly child-centered program. The goals minimize the role and importance of the teacher and put the primary focus on the child.

Lists of goals such as these present little problem for people who prepare them merely in response to external requests or requirements. However, for teachers who really believe in these goals and are sincere in wanting to move toward them, the list presents enormous problems of implementation, problems that the North team was hardly aware of.

The team had not ordered the list of goals with any sense of priority, perhaps feeling that they were all equally worthwhile and equally "do-able." The PAS consultant was later to remark: "There were too many to try to achieve in a single year of setting up a new school from scratch. While they might be ones that might be considered realistic over a period of two or three years, I think they were simply too much to try to tackle in a first stage."

Programmatic Decisions

Having had little more experience in running annexes than the team itself, the Advancement School provided little concrete help for the team in setting up its program. However, the team's first inclination was to build into its program aspects that members had seen in operation inside the Advancement School building. These aspects included not only changes in curriculum and teaching style, but in the school atmosphere as well.

The team planned to teach four simultaneous classes in the morning. They planned a 15-minute break for the children after two classes "just to let the kids talk to each other in the halls."[10] They decided to have the children eat lunch at the annex rather than going to the main building; they toyed with various schemes for fixing lunch themselves for the children--140 of them--but then dropped the idea when none of the plans seemed workable. They planned the last period of the day as a "family group" period, where the students would get together with their teachers to do group exercises and learn to get along together. (This was taken directly from the Advancement School program.)

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[10] Later when things were very hectic, they were to insist that this break had been originally designed to give them a break from seeing the children all morning.

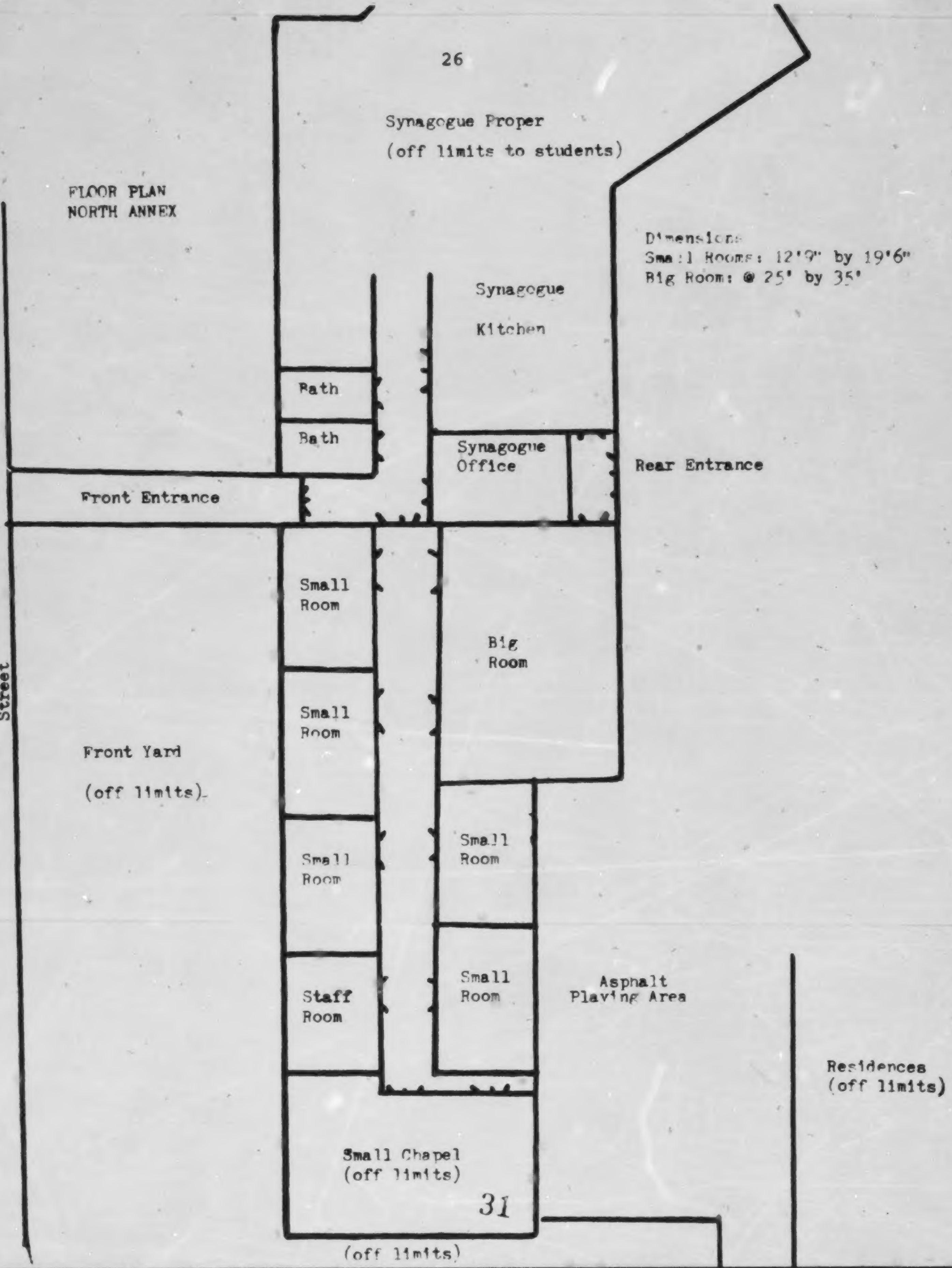
The first indication the group had that things might not go as smoothly during the year as they had in the summer came when they went to the annex building for the first time. (See floor plan.) The first thing the group and the PAS summer consultant did was to set up the small rooms to see how many chairs each would hold. Each room held 25, at the most. The big room held 140 chairs (the number of children rostered to the team) if they squeezed the chairs in. It was obvious that the roster they had worked out over the summer was unworkable. The team sat down in despair.

It turned out to be a very productive morning, though. The summer consultant had them get out sheets of newsprint and work out a schedule that would take into account the severely limited space arrangements and the numbers of students. Their first decision was to take the teachers' desks out of the small classrooms, creating a staff room where all their desks could be together. This left room in the small rooms for 25 chairs.

The major decision reached--the schedule they later followed for half the year--was to split the students into six teams. On a given day three of the teams would be rostered to the big room where together (60 students) they would receive large group instruction. The other three teams would rotate among the small classrooms, having four small group instruction classes in the morning. A teacher's daily roster would therefore consist of three periods of small group instruction and one period of large group instruction. The schedule for the students would be reversed the next day,

FLOOR PLAN
NORTH ANNEX

Dimensions
Small Rooms: 12'9" by 19'6"
Big Room: @ 25' by 35'


Synagogue Proper
(off limits to students)
Synagogue
Kitchen
Bath
Bath
Synagogue
Office
Rear Entrance
Front Entrance
Small
Room
Big
Room
Small
Room
Small
Room
Small
Room
Staff
Room
Small
Room
Street
Front Yard
(off limits)
Asphalt
Playing Area
Residences
(off limits)
Small Chapel
(off limits)
(off limits)

with those who had received large group instruction the day before rotating among the small classrooms.[11]

The days were called Blue days and Yellow days, so that children (and teachers) could readily identify which schedule they were on for the day. There were two major unforeseen drawbacks to this plan: 1) that the teachers would not see the children in the same setting on consecutive days; homework for the small room classes could not be assigned and collected the next day for example; and 2) that large group instruction is substantively different from small; none of the teachers had any experience with large group instruction.

Despite the fact that the schedule later proved unworkable and had to be abandoned, the day it was actually developed was an important one: it proved to the team that they had the resources to confront a seemingly insurmountable problem and come up with a solution. At the beginning of the day, they were in the depths of despair; by the end they were joyous with the solution.

Much later the principal made a very similar observation about the importance of the summer planning as a whole:

> And in that regard I don't consider that the planning was wasted. I think it helped build in them a process of consultation with each other, and even if that consultation eventually turned out to be about things that they abandoned, that began the process--that's where the interplay began--that's where the

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[11] The afternoon schedule was planned and carried out differently: every afternoon following lunch (except Tuesday) the students would return to the main building for their minor subject classes. (On Tuesdays the group stayed at the annex for health class and developmental reading, taught by the annex teachers.) The last period of the day was family group time and was always spent at the annex.

mutual concerns, respects, commitments evolved. And I don't know that it ever happened in one day, or at one meeting--they felt it; I felt it. And I'll be egotistical enough to say I think the five of us still feel it. Maybe we didn't accomplish all that we thought; maybe the time slots and time frames in the teams had to be modified drastically. But what we did establish was how to go about changing things, together, without losing hope.

Taped Interview
May, 1971

The Fall: Beginning

The First Few Weeks

The first day "was hell."

Teachers had come back from a short vacation after the summer PAS program, their spirits and expectations high. They were going to run an exciting school, a school with a "freed-up" atmosphere where students and teachers related to each other openly and honestly, where learning took place spontaneously and warmly.

Their goals and expectations were clear; but the methods for attaining them were not. They had seen and heard (at the Advancement School) just what they wanted, and had talked to teachers there who told them (and made them believe) that it could be done. They were prepared for it to be. No one had prepared them, though, for the struggle it would take to get to the point they wanted to reach.

> We were discussing the ideal and not the real, I think, in some ways. We had planned exactly what we wanted to have happen, but yet you really don't know what's going to happen until you have your children right there. For example, we had set up the large room for the first meeting with the children, and we said right away that this room could hold 140 kids. We knew it. But we were talking about 140 kids who could sit down in their seats and not call over to somebody, and not get up, not play, not get into a scuffle...And when we brought all those children up here, we just said, oh gosh, what have we gotten into. It was really an eyeopener. It was funny. I got a kick out of that. Oh, by the end of the day my spirits were down.
>
> Sue, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

The teachers had not anticipated the problems in trying to move students and teachers to a more trusting atmosphere. As the consultant later point out, a teacher "can't really make the tone of a building just by saying, I'm going to do this, because there are two sets of people who create the tone of a building, and they are the teachers and the students who are perceiving what it is that the teacher is trying to achieve." (Taped Interview, March 1970)

But for the North team there were additional complications which made the day even more devastating to their morale: They expected that the students knew about coming to the annex. Since all the students were coming from the annex at the PAS-affiliated elementary school, it was assumed that the students had been told about the plans to extend their program into the junior high school years. The North team also expected that the students would welcome the chance to be in another annex and that they would know how to adjust to it, and behave appropriately in an annex.

If the students had been told they were to be in an annex, they conveniently forgot it over the summer. They most definitely did not want to be in an annex; in fact, they very much wanted to be in the normal seventh grade program at North.[12] (As the chapter on students will make clear, there are aspects of being in a regular junior high school which seem very important at this developmental stage of an adolescent's life.) The adjustment problems brought about by their being in another annex were severe and for a few children persisted throughout the year. The children responded negatively, and the teachers were stunned.

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[12] In an interview (March, 1971), Mike described the reactions of the students in their first meeting in the auditorium: "We tried talking to the kids in the auditorium, you know, introducing ourselves; this is the Annex, welcome, and we were met with such an ugly feeling--'Another annex? Why aren't we part of North?' It really turned us off.

A student, writing the history of the North annex for the yearbook later, confirmed Mike's impression of the students' feelings: "On the first day of school, there was a lot of confusion. Everyone was disgusted. No one wanted to go to the annex. No one wanted to be with the same people they were with last year. From the North Auditorium we went to the lunchroom and found four teachers waiting for us. They assigned us to home room sections and walked us to the Annex. At the Annex, the teachers told us about the new program and we were still confuse- "

Looking back, Mike talked about the discrepancy between their expectations and reality:

> Plans? We didn't really plan what we were going to do that first week. We expected great things from the kids and the program, but we didn't really plan what would happen if we didn't get these expectations. We expected great things when the kids came in here, but, of course, we didn't plan for the reaction that they didn't want to be in an annex. We expected respect from the kids yet we didn't plan for the fact that they would know each other and not know us.
>
> Taped Interview
> May, 1971

The teachers were so unprepared for the reactions from the students that they went into a period of shock. They could not think creatively about how to handle the situation. They elected not to institute the Blue day/Yellow day system but instead to meet with and teach the students by the four advisory sections. They made this decision perhaps hoping that reversion to a more typical schedule would create a sense of order in the building; or perhaps because they could not get the students' attention for a long enough period to explain the other system.

> After this class, all the students went into the main room for lunch. The tables are collapsable, the chairs are collapsable; the lunches the kids buy are pretty awful; some kids forget to either buy or bring a lunch so they have nothing to eat and the whole room erupts into chaos. The noise at some points is unreal. All

> the teachers are in the room but the attention at this point is paid to individual kids, taking a great deal of energy and not making any noticeable difference to the noise of the room as a whole. Kids run around and hit the legs of the tables so that they collapse, scattering all the lunches and notebooks which are on them, making the kids whose things they are yell and run after the kids who knocked the table down.

Observation Notes, North
September, 1970

Aside from the shock resulting from the students' reactions to their school, there were other important reasons that the teachers were unable to formulate immediate solutions:

1) They did not receive the help from the Advancement School they had anticipated. They had felt very close to the person who had served as their summer consultant; his was a warm, personal, group-oriented style they had gotten used to and came to admire. Their new consultant was different. She was an older teacher, most of whose recent teaching experience had been at an academic high school. Moreover, she was new to the Advancement School and uncertain about her role as consultant. As she said later, the Advancement School personnel had told her more about what she was not to do than about what she was supposed to do: "'Don't be directive, you are not the principal,' I was told. 'You are not the this; you are not the that.' Yeh, but what am I? This is one of the things that I was never very sure of."

From the beginning, she had expressed disapproval of their plans for the annex, both the program specifics and the general "free" atmosphere they proposed. The group resented her criticisms and when the plans did not work out as anticipated, the strain in the relationship between her and the rest of the group was intense. That strain prohibited the group from calling on her for much-needed help in bringing about order in the program and prohibited her from feeling free to offer advice. The intensity of the strain was such that it was not resolved until the following March.

2) Another unanticipated problem the group had to contend with was the lack of materials and equipment. The group had received contradictory information about materials all summer. At one point the principal had told them that he had been told the building would be equipped as a new school and they should order supplies accordingly. At another point they were told by the vice-principal in charge of rostering and ordering supplies that there was no money available for any supplies.

Following the principal's advice, the team made a list of all the equipment they would need, including desks, chairs, bookcases and science equipment. The total request came to well over $6,000, which they submitted together with the proper forms.[13] September came and the team had none of the things they had ordered. They were forced to start their program with virtually no equipment--no blackboards, no overhead projectors, no mimeograph machines, no typewriters, no bookcases and, worst of all, no lockers for the students.

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[13] Much later--in December--they found out that personnel in the budget office had taken one look at the total sum requested and decided that it was too much. Instead of sending the order back for revisions, the budget people simply "filed" the request, without informing anyone--including the principal--of their decision.

There was no place for the students to put books or hang coats; consequently they had to carry everything with them all day, and all available surfaces in the classroom were littered with sweaters, lunches, books and notebooks.

Perhaps if the attitudes of the children had been more positive, if the team had worked together before, or if the consultant had felt more secure in her role, the lack of equipment would not have had such dire effects. Perhaps the group could have rallied and collected material and furniture in a more resourceful way. However, the combination of all the unanticipated problems generally paralyzed the team, precluding their dealing successfully with any one problem.[14]

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[14] Note should also be taken of the difficulties the group encountered in organizing and conducting a school in the midst of an ongoing religious institution. Only a section of the building had been alloted to them, and the other areas were "off limits" to the students. These areas included major portions of the physical facility as well as large sections of the grounds. An immediate problem the team encountered was clarifying for the students what portion of the building was theirs, and what was the synagogue's domain. In addition, the fact that the synagogue was still functioning as such meant that early in the semester the team had to plan and carry out several day-long trips during religious holidays when services were conducted in the building. In October the principal commented on this aspect of the program:

> And here we have this dichotomy of where this is an annex to our school and it is still an ongoing religious institution. And we've had to make certain adjustments, not that the owners of the property have called on us to do it, but we felt that it was not very good for our youngsters or for the congregants to have our youngsters there on the religious holidays. It is not a building solely devoted to that purpose (being a school) and so we have a lot of constraints about where the children may walk and where they may not walk.

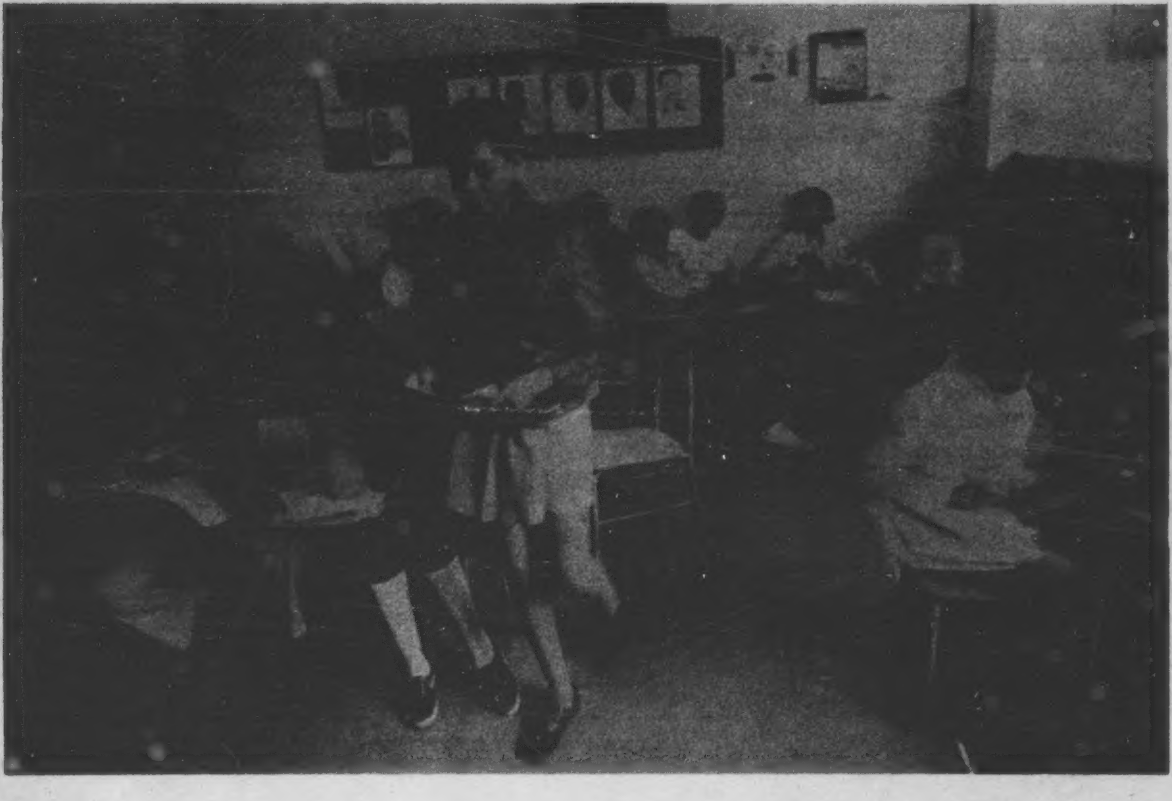
Taped Interview
October, 1970

Administrative Detail (or, "It's Your School, Baby")

> It isn't clear to most of them even now that there is no system operating that is going to control the students' behavior. They still allow their meetings to run over until half the kids are back and yelling in the halls and then the teachers rush out to do something for advisory (period). It's as though they're expecting some other bigger system to be handling the kids' entrance back into the annex from the main building, and they're really confused when that system doesn't operate and instead the kids go crazy and run, run through the big room and yell, and there's a lot of noise and some fights. That's confusing to those teachers because they're not aware yet that they have complete freedom, that there's no system that's going to take care of any of their problems, that they have to come up with it--that they have to devise it right there.
>
> Taped Observations, North
> October, 1970

There is little in a teacher's prior experience in a regular junior high school to prepare him for handling a free, unstructured situation. Without being aware of it, teachers come to rely on the larger system which operates within the institution. They may retreat into their classrooms using what Hal called the "cubicle approach," but the retreat is carried out with sure knowledge that the larger system is operating, ever-ready to handle an emergency medical situation or an unruly, disruptive student.

It took the annex teachers several months to appreciate the full impact of what happens when that system is not operating: when one can't send a child out of class because there is no one available to send the child to; when one learns to handle emergency diabetic equipment because there is no nurse to do it; when one has to ring the bells to signal the beginning and end of class (and who's to do that if everyone is



teaching at the same time?); when everything from juice to absenteeism is handled by the teachers.

By the end of October, Mike related privately to the writer that he wondered if he had not had enough. He stated that he had been putting in five times the work and accomplishing half as much as he had the previous year. To do everything that had to be done for his classes and the annex in general he was coming in at 7:15 in the morning. He was not sure it was worth it. Edith complained bitterly that they needed a system for getting the students to class, that it still wasn't clear who was to ring the bells. She didn't understand why all the teachers couldn't agree that students should have to stay in their seats for the big room classes and that something should happen to them if they didn't.

Both Sue and Hal felt that one of the major problems of the annex was the administrative detail they were forced into by being there. They felt that the summer had not prepared them adequately for this extra work and felt snowed under by all that had to be done.

Actually the situation was not as bad as it could have been. There were extra adults available the team could call on for help. One of the consequences of the initial negative experience with the students and the paralysis which followed was that the four primary teachers could not think of ways to utilize the resources they did have. They had the PAS consultant and two Antioch College co-op students assigned to the annex for the year. They had an NTA (non-teaching assistant) assigned to the annex (although it was January before an NTA was assigned who stayed for more than three weeks). And in the Fall they had two student teachers. For a month these additional people did little except stand around the big room during the classes, and it was not until February that they were used in the program in any meaningful way.

There were two major outcomes of the team's assumption of all the administrative responsibility...the first is negative. Because there was no vice-principal, no discipline room, no disciplinarian to handle disruptive students--and because the level of disruption and unruliness was extremely high--the teachers got into the habit of calling the parents about discipline problems--all discipline problems. There seemed to be no other effective means of control. The calls were fairly frequent (several a day) because the incidents, especially in some classrooms, were frequent.

This procedure set up a negative interaction initially between the teachers and the parents, and was perhaps partly responsible for the lack of parent involvement in the program. Their first parents' meeting was taken up in explaining to parents how students should behave in the annex. This problem carried over into November when the first report card was accompanied by a form letter to all parents of students who had bad marks explaining what the students did wrong in the annex--there was no corresponding letter for the students who had done well.

The second outcome of the administrative independence was the realization it brought that the teachers could not remain isolated from each other. It was not possible to retreat into a classroom, close the door and have nothing to do with the rest of the annex. Additionally, there was the time every day that each teacher had to spend teaching in the big room; there, if one teacher's expectations for student behavior were different from another's, it was immediately apparent.

Teachers had to depend on each other to do their share of the administrative work; it was not possible for a teacher to "relax" for a while--everyone would know. Everyone needed everyone else. This unavoidable interdependence is what kept the team together despite wide differences in philosophical perspective. For example, Hal and Edith placed themselves philosophically at opposite ends of the "permissive" scale for student behavior. It is likely that had they taught in the normal junior high school situation, they might never have talked about their different viewpoints. In the annex they not only had to talk to each other; they also had to come to resolution.

By the end of the year much of the administrative duty had been sorted out and had become routine. The same teachers who in the beginning complained most about it, later stressed its importance in conveying to teachers a feeling that this was their school--they made it whatever it was. They were later to feel proud that despite all the problems with students and discipline, the teachers had never sent anyone to the main building to be suspended--they had handled everything themselves.

The Classes

> What happened, I tried to remain flexible in my planning until I met the kids...but when I came here our system--our schedule was so fantastic and the kids reacted so negatively and I couldn't get any enthusiasm for doing those things. I couldn't figure out how I was going to do all the creative things that I'd learned this summer with all of these kids all of the time. I just couldn't get on my feet about it.
>
> And I know that the kids got turned off as much by my personality as by what I was doing with them, because I didn't like what I was doing with them. And I couldn't make them like it because I didn't like it and I couldn't find anything that I liked doing.
>
> And this wasn't for a few weeks; this was for months.
>
> Edith, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

The summer decisions to drastically change teaching style and content haunted two of the three teachers who tried it for the beginning months of school. It is one thing to decide to have a "freed-up" class in the midst of the larger, traditional junior high school setting; it is another to attempt such a thing for the first time in the midst of the disorder and chaos of a new program. Sue (in March, 1971) explained the reasons for the decision the three had made this way: "Some people had the idea that, wow, I'm going to open myself up, this is going to be a free and unique experience and we're just going to go, we're going to learn. And they became frustrated. And they saw that it could not work until the children really, really understood them and they could function well in a certain situation."

The two teachers who had such difficulties with their classes had both been in workshops during the summer with very non-directive, open-classroom workshop leaders who set very admirable and charismatic examples of ways to work with children. As everyone later admitted, no one at PAS actually told them to run an open classroom, or teach in a different way, or not to use textbooks--but the seed was planted nonetheless. And the classes went very badly, especially in the big room.

The primary reason the classes went badly was the lack of planning on the part of the teachers. Their resourcefulness was being taxed to the limit just keeping the doors of the annex open and keeping a semblance of a school running inside. They appeared to have no energy left for figuring out workable plans for their classes. Additionally they had not one but two different types of classes to plan for each day: they had to plan for their small classrooms and they had to design lessons for large group instruction in the big room. Instead of planning different lessons they tended either to conduct the same lesson in the big room as they had in the small, or show films. There was no attempt (until February) to break the group into smaller units, provide for individual work, set up activity centers or, in some way, modify the classroom structure; whether showing a film or teaching a lesson, it was done with the entire group of 60 students.

Edith had the most difficult time of any of the teachers; (Another teacher attributes her difficulties to the fact that her expectations were higher than anyone else's on the team). It is worth studying Edith's class problems in some detail; they represented the extreme of what was happening to every teacher in the annex, and their intensity affected greatly the operations of the team as a whole.

During one of the worst periods that fall, Edith was teaching a class of 60 students in the big room using a microphone. She had shown a film and wanted to have a discussion of the film, but it was impossible for students to participate because of the noise level. As she was talking into the microphone, explaining the film to the group, one student got up from his table, walked to the front of the room and very deliberately turned off the switch for the microphone. Edith kept talking for a moment until she realized no sound was being carried; in what appeared to be a dazed state she merely walked over to the microphone box, clicked the speaker back on and continued where she had left off.

There were numerous blow-ups between her and the students. Several girls in her advisory told her that no matter what she did for the rest of the year they were going to hate her. In another incident, she was breaking up a fight in her class (again in the big room) and there was a lot of noise and yelling and confusion. As she was writing a detention slip for one of the fighters, a student in the class raised his hand and was called on. As she later described the incident, he began yelling at her, loudly asking why she didn't have any respect for the students, why they were asked to have respect for her when she did not have any respect for them. Further, he yelled, the whole annex was going crazy and all the students hated her.

Her problems were exacerbated by the fact that she felt as though she was getting no help from the rest of the team. She tended to dominate the meetings that Fall, telling the team about her problems in the classes and her problems with the students. She expressed the feeling in late October that she saw herself as more on the traditional side than the rest of the team (especially Hal), and that her problems were made worse by the inconsistency between her expectations for children and Hal's expectations. Secondly she said she felt that the team had split apart, that it had lost its cohesiveness from the summer and that individuals were now going their separate ways, almost as though she were the only team member left still trying the plans they had made in the summer.

The team was not in a position to deal with these accusations, primarily because they seemed surprised at the depth of the difficulty:

> Now Edith had very high expectations. And she went through a period here for two weeks when I just cringed, because she was at wit's end. She was very tense and very explosive with the children and I heard her explode at them with things I thought I'd never hear her say. And I was taken aback by it...
>
> Sue, Taped Interview
> October, 1970

In addition, they themselves were having difficulties adjusting to the annex situation. There was no one whose classes were going so well that he had the extra energy or time to give Edith the amount of support and advice she needed. Although the team "wanted to stand behind her" they did not seem to know how to convey that support.

Mike's problems were not so evident, but he was in despair about his classes as well. He was attempting to teach in a way he felt to be totally foreign to his personality. When asked later why he had begun that way, he said:

> Because I liked the idea of just really being relaxed and freed-up with the kids--I just liked the breaking down of what appeared to be tradition. By not wearing a tie, by using a first name basis, I thought, well, wow, this is terrific. And we all agreed, let's try it, we all had such terrific ideas of how this was going to run and how we were just going to be here and the kids were going to be learning and everything was going to be just hunky-dory. So we tried it and it didn't work, at least as far as I was concerned. I guess the breakdown of the traditional teacher as authoritarian was not basically such a good idea because they had nobody to look to for structure, and there really was no structure.
>
> Mike, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

At the end of October, Mike made drastic changes in his classroom. He decided that he could not teach in the "PAS style" and was going to revert to a style with which he felt comfortable. Two events helped him make this decision. The first was a long talk he had with the North principal who told him to start being himself. He told Mike that he had become too "PAS-ish" and had tried to lose himself in new style instead of incorporating those parts he felt comfortable with.

The day after his talk with the principal Mike had a long talk with the team (except for Edith who had to go home), trying to explain to them the way he felt about his classes and the changes he was going to make. Sue and Hal stayed with Mike until 5:00 talking to him about his decision--it was the first group supportive action they had taken since the school year had begun and as such it was very important. Mike had just wanted to announce to them he was making these changes (such as insisting that the students call him Mr. instead of by his first name) but Hal said they weren't going to leave until they understood the reason for the changes. And they stayed and talked it out. It was the first the group knew of the extent of the problem Mike saw in his classes.

Sue's classes were the best in the annex--her classroom became an oasis of structure and clear expectations during the first few chaotic months. Students responded well in her classroom because hers was a structure they understood and could handle. Hal's classes were totally different--his were consistently the most "non-structured" classes in the annex and for much of the year students seemed confused by the expectations there--expectations which were present but not stated. Their confusion often was translated into belligerence and hostility, but Hal was better prepared to deal with this than either Edith or Mike--he had expected it and handled it well.

The Strike and Beyond

Things had reached such a state of despair in October that when a teachers' strike was threatened and then accomplished in Philadelphia, the teachers at the annex welcomed it with open arms. As Mike later said, he "couldn't have cared less" when the strike was settled. He was so "down" and exhausted by the amount of work the annex required he welcomed the rest. Both he and Hal said at about this time that they didn't think they would be in teaching much longer (the problems in Hal's classes were getting to him as well), that this would be their last year teaching.

The only teacher to come in during the strike was Sue (it seems likely that this fact is related to her success with her classes). She taught the annex students who came to school (about 80 or 90 a day) in the lunchroom at the main building. Although she was considered a scab by the regular North teachers, she was concerned that no teachers at the main building would know any of the annex children, that the students would come in and no one would even know their names.

The period of the strike and the rest of that month were truly the low point in the team's history. Members were thoroughly disillusioned both with their classes and with the annex in general. Nothing they had planned seemed to be working out; nothing about the annex was the way they had imagined it would be.

Then they attended the first Saturday morning session at the Advancement School, and got together for the first time with teachers from the other minischools.[15]

No other PAS-affiliated program had been as ambitious as the North annex; therefore no other group was having the difficulties the North team was having. The North team emerged from the meeting even more depressed. They met as a group that Saturday morning after talking to the other teachers. They tried to follow the agenda, but could not because they kept drifting into discussions of the big room, the students' attitudes, their own non-supportiveness. Hal made a suggestion for how the big room could be changed; Edith snapped at him almost in tears that she was "not going to take your idealism any more." It was decided that they must meet together, that they had to get away from the annex itself and find a place where they could talk uninterruptedly for several hours about solutions for the big room.

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[15] This was the first of several Saturday morning staff development sessions, conducted by the PAS external staff for all teachers in the seven ongoing minischools. The sessions were planned to allow teachers a chance to share experiences and deal with common problems.

The decision to meet to make new plans for their program was the beginning of an upsurge in the annex development, an upsurge which was to take them through the rest of the year.

Reorganization

The Big Meeting

The Advancement School provided staff development money and some personnel for a three-hour meeting the North team held November 6, a week after the Saturday morning blow-up. Two-and-a-half hours of that meeting were spent talking about the big room and how to institute changes there. The meeting was long overdue, the need for it great, and yet the atmosphere in which it was held made the interaction and planning jumpy and desperate.

After much discussion the team came up with a tentative plan that would involve having the three-hour block of time students spent in the big room every other day split between two activities, instead of four subject classes. For one-and-a-half hours, the students would have reading (following a Science Research Associates, reading laboratory approach), and for the second hour-and-a-half they would have a skills program. The subject-matter teachers would provide worksheets the students would use during skills time; there was some talk that they could even use contracts during this time (as they had listed in their goals description). It was thought that Edith could coordinate the reading program and the consultant would coordinate the skills program. Coordination would involve supervising the students' use of the materials during that time period.

Much of the impetus behind this plan was the desire by all the teachers to get out of teaching in the big room. They universally agreed that the big room classes they taught were the worst. It may seem strange that Edith, who was having the most severe problems in her teaching, would be chosen to coordinate the big room. The reason is that just prior to the meeting she had instituted a reading program in the big room utilizing folders and worksheets and it had gone surprisingly well. Each of the other teachers seemed to want to believe that this was the answer to big room organization and that Edith knew how to do it. (As it turned out, the students' initial enthusiasm for the folders wore off.)

The teachers were in favor of beginning the change right away, switching the whole roster around; as Hal said, "just jumping right in." Members of the Advancement School staff were more cautious, however. They did not feel that the plan had been well-enough thought out and were concerned lest North have another fiasco, one from which they might not recover.

About a week after this meeting, the director of the PAS External Program, Murph Shapiro, sent the North team a memo in which he suggested that they not begin the new system until the new term began at the end of January. As he said, his "initial reaction is one of both excitement and wariness. A well-functioning program of the type you describe would be beautiful and exciting. To get a program like this to function well takes a tremendous amount of planning, organization and cooperation. I would suggest that nothing be tried of this sort until January. For this program to function well and in an exciting way, very elaborate and careful planning is an absolute necessity."

Although the memo did not forbid their beginning the new plan right away--and although it invited further discussion of the plan--the team reacted as though they had been told "no."

They never discussed the memo with Shapiro, alluding to it much later as the reason they did not make the change when they wanted to.

December Slump

From the moment of the memo until January, the team went into a withdrawn slump. The program continued much as before although things had stabilized somewhat and were certainly not as chaotic. There were specific things which could have been done to improve the day-to-day operations of the annex, changes which should have taken place regardless of whether the team made the larger changeover. However, the slump was so intense the team could not bring itself to make these changes; it was almost as though it was "all or nothing": their decision not to make the main change seemed to preclude their considering seriously other possible changes.

On December 7, Shapiro attended a meeting of the team at the annex and made several specific suggestions. The team still did not have student lockers so students were forced to carry their coats around with them all day (as well as books and lunches). Shapiro suggested the team bring in coat hangers. The response from one team member was "where will we get 120 coat hangers?" The rest of the suggestions were greeted with the same non-productive, diffident responses.

The break and the lunch period had continued to be very disorderly times during the day with some students eating lunch in the bathrooms because it was more quiet and private. Shapiro suggested they take one of the small rooms which was not used much and make it into a quiet reading room to be used during free times like the break and lunch. (The question of privacy and quiet and how to handle the break and lunch had come up often in their meetings.) Hal then told the group that he had two old rugs at home which could be used to make a "quiet room." He would bring them in, he said, except that he did not have a way. (He had never tried to get them into his car, assuming they would not go). Team members, having gotten a little excited by the prospects of free rugs, slumped back depressed, accepting the idea that there was no way to bring in the rugs. The writer, usually a silent observer in these meetings, broke in to say that she would personally help the team bring the rugs in, using a car at her disposal.

This lack of resourcefulness and creative energy persisted. They did think of a way to bring Hal's rugs into school but then let them sit crumpled up in one corner of a room for two additional weeks. Equipment (like tape recorders) that they had complained bitterly about not receiving came and remained at the main building for weeks, waiting for someone from the annex to pick it up.

In one of the meeting observations during this period, the following notation was made:

> Meeting full of complaints, some of them just general unanswerable 'ain't it awful' complaints about the kids, the big room, the general mess; others, unanswerable, meeting-stopping gripes about the things which they don't have, like lockers. The last are real problems and need to be solved but everyone knows they won't be solved in a meeting, they aren't meeting-type problems and they just waste valuable time. Turns out one of the positive things they decided long ago--seating arrangements in the big room--they aren't doing, and Murph had to suggest that they do it...when that was one of the few things they had enacted before. Now they're holding out

> the changes in the big room schedule as the magic key, as a reason they aren't successful.
>
> Observation Notes, North
> December 1970

Hal's Letter: Revitalization

In January the group came together to discuss the big room again. Due to the long delay between the plan's initial conception and this meeting, there was a great deal of tension in the room at the beginning of the meeting. Although the plans for the big room were not finalized at this meeting (in fact, were not discussed), the open discussion which ensued served to draw the group together again and to enable them to plan effectively for the change.

Part of the impetus for this good discussion came from a memo Hal had written to the group. They had all begun to feel "down," primarily because they had anticipated a change, counted on a change and then none had taken place. The enthusiasm for the folder work had diminished and most classes were not going well. Even Sue felt that her work with students was in a "rut" and she "wasn't satisfied." Hal's memo, which he called a "statement of personal opinion," read in part:

> After four months of operation the North Annex is a qualified success. The signs are clear and unmistakable.
>
> 1) The children, in general, like to come here--a number of children regularly come to school early just to be here and play records and talk to the teachers; others have voluntarily stayed late to participate in activities such as the Christmas show and the budding drill team.
>
> 2) The children are beginning to appreciate the advantages of the Annex--such as (in their own words) "nicer teachers"; "more time to ourselves"; and "the music room" among others.

> 3) We have managed to develop a relationship with some students that would not have been possible in the main building.
>
> On the other hand, the Annex just as clearly needs improvement in some areas. Many of the children show a lack of regard for their own and others' personal belongings, such as books and food. Others show a frustrating lack of regard for the feelings of their classmates and teachers. In other words the Annex has a morale problem at both the student and faculty levels which inhibits the growth and learning of many of its students. This is especially tragic because this problem nullifies much of the effect of the successes mentioned above.

At the end of the memo, Hal made a number of suggestions, one of which was that they reconsider the big room plan and that they set a target date (February 1st) for the reorganization. Shapiro was also present at this meeting and the combination of his leadership and Hal's memo caused the group to talk openly about the way they had been functioning. They recognized and dealt with the fact that they had different philosophical positions on student behavior. Instead of blaming each other secretly as they had, they talked about and decided upon several clear rules for children's behavior in the annex. (For example, no running.) Edith's tension about her classes and need for support from the team were reintroduced and this time, through Shapiro's guidance, responded to by the rest of the team.

There followed a series of meetings to finalize the plans for the big room change. The group leaned toward the plan they had discussed in November, with Edith handling SRA reading for the first half of the morning and the consultant handling skills for the second half (skill instruction being organized along the lines of a contract system). PAS staff members continued to feel that the schedule as they outlined it was too cumbersome and too hard for students to remember. But the group appeared to have little energy left for discussion of how to reorganize; they were determined to do it.

Some of the meetings would have seemed incredible to an outside observer; full of contradictions, little related to the reality of the problems that the annex faced. The team often ignored some critical factors. For example, the consultant was scheduled to supervise the skills program every day for an hour and a half; yet she had just announced that she would not be in on Tuesdays because of staff meetings at the Advancement School. (She had always spent Fridays at PAS; now she would be gone two days a week.)

In retrospect it seems those January meetings and the decisions which ensued were important not because any specific decisions emerged, but because they got the group moving again. The group remained together, participated in long meetings and came up with some plans--these were important signs of strength. Edith later remarked about the relationship between the way the team was functioning and the way the annex was functioning:

> ...we were always dedicated enough to what we were doing to say, now look, this isn't what we're supposed to be doing; this is not what we decided we were going to do, and so let's get back on the track. And I would say that happened three or four times during the year, and each time we talked about what the team should be, we got ourselves together and then got the school together. But as soon as the team started to fall apart, then the school started to fall apart because we couldn't work anymore. We were just mad at everybody or all depressed, and so we just didn't try.
>
> Taped Interview
> May, 1971

The plan which they put into effect the first of February had 60 students spending every other day in the big room with Edith using SRA materials half the time, and the consultant supervising skills instruction for the other half of the morning. During skills the students worked on contracts from each subject area; new contracts were issued every three weeks. The large room was divided into activity areas and the contract work was more project-oriented than worksheet-oriented. Students were free to move around the big room, to work on whatever interested them from the contract choices. Some parts of the plan were still complicated, but both students and teachers showed a remarkable ability to grasp all the complicating parts.[16]

Change in Attitude

From the moment the team made the decision to go ahead with their plans for the big room reorganization, there was a distinct change in attitude; there was an enthusiasm and excitement among the teachers they had not had since the summer.

> Before our big meeting I felt very alone and confused as to my role on a team. Things were very unorganized and random and I particularly was disorganized. On January 8 we re-evaluated and honestly discussed our problems. I felt more aware of the team and felt better about my work on it.
>
> Edith, Written Questionnaire
> January, 1971

Edith's optimism grew, a feeling shared by the other team members. Two weeks later she was even more excited as they moved into reorganization:

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[16] A more complete explanation of the new schedule is included in Part II, the section on the Instructional Program.

> After our last problem-time we really picked up and got involved in straightening out our problems. We shared a lot of our feelings and I felt helped by all of this. Our involvement and commitment in the new program was apparent and we enthusiastically worked to get ready.
>
> Edith, Written Questionnaire
> February, 1971

In ranking how well they were functioning, the group moved from an average of 4.7 on a seven-point scale (one being low) to a 6.0 in a two-week period[17]--from the end of January to February. Team members reported that the "team was functioning near peak capacity" and that they felt that "for the first time in about two months...we are trying to cooperate."

Some of this renewed enthusiasm may have been contagious. Despite a very complicated schedule and an even more complicated plan for introducing the change, students were very cooperative during the period of changeover. The reorganization proceeded smoothly. Even though they had never used contracts before, the teachers were able to create challenging and workable contracts. From the beginning, the big room skills program resembled the famed English "open-classroom", with students moving between different areas and making independent decisions. The reading program had students homogeneously grouped, and Edith supervised work on three different reading levels taught in separate rooms. The two Antioch students assisted with these classes.

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[17] Both teams in the report periodically responded to written questionnaires throughout the year. Several questions required numerical rankings.

Later the principal was to say of this period, "If it's true that you can provide good education even on the end of a log, then we did that here. By good education I mean this: I think the thing that was turned around in this last start was the learning climate."

Involvement with the System

During the planning period but before they had actually instituted the change (when, as one teacher said, she was "bored" with her classes and was just "finishing up loose ends") the team received its first visit from the District Superintendent. The team was unprepared for her visit. She came alone (without even the principal) and her visit lasted about twenty minutes. There was little opportunity to explain to her the purposes of the program.

It was later reported to the team that the District Superintendent left the annex and went to see the principal at the main building, expressing her feeling that the annex "had to go." It was evident that she was upset about her visit and her impressions of the program. She also met with the Director of the Advancement School and the External Coordinator to express her reservations about the annex. Shapiro in discussing that meeting said, "Her major thrust was the inadequacy of the facilities; there was less concern with program."

Perhaps if this visit had occurred before Christmas--when the group was listless and depressed--the team would have reacted differently. Their reaction at the end of January was one of anger and commitment to their program. They wanted the annex continued! Their planning for the new schedule had given the project a new lease on life and they wanted to see it through.

They were too busy making the program changes in February to do much organized work on behalf of the continuation of the annex. But in March the group called another parents' meeting. This one, however, was not to talk about the behavior of the students. This time they wanted to enlist the parents' aid for political action to help save the annex for the next year.

It is remarkable that some forty parents showed up for this purpose, remarkable in that the initial contact with parents in the fall had been so negative. That negativism, for the most part, had disappeared and several of the parents were eager to help. The team split the parents into small groups according to what the parents were interested in doing to help the annex. For example, one committee of parents was formed to call the District Superintendent and express their feelings and concern that the annex should be continued.

The program was certainly in better shape with the reorganization, but it was obvious their problems were not over yet. The team had to find a way to assure the annex of at least another year of operation. Additionally there were tensions within the group which had never been faced or resolved; those tensions were to re-emerge strongly in March.

March Conflicts

The Team and the Consultant

The initial tension which had developed in the fall between the group and their new PAS consultant had never been resolved. The tension was omnipresent and was talked about privately but never openly admitted in the group. Two things served to bring the problem to a head in March:

The first was that the team's new schedule was successful and running fairly smoothly. More than just successful, it was indeed innovative and one of which they could be proud. With a firm foundation established in the program area, the group could turn its attention and energies to other matters.

A second factor was that the new program relied on the consultant a great deal. She was responsible for students every day for an hour and a half. Her responsibility, however, was to supervise students in their independent work, and depended on a good relationship with the students. The team had given her this responsibility without consulting her much about it; it had just developed in the planning that she would have this position.

There were particular problems connected with her supervising the large room. The first problem, one which could have been anticipated before, was that the consultant was now spending Tuesdays as well as Fridays at PAS (this was just one of the bothersome details the team had not wanted to have slow down its planning enthusiasm in January). The group never adequately planned for her absence on Tuesdays, and individual team members continued to be surprised every Tuesday when she did not come. The second problem was that the team did not really value the position it had alloted her; the group saw her work in the big room as "supervisory" or as a "monitor," an "undemanding role."

The job was not undemanding, particularly for someone in the consultant's position. She had begun the year in an ambiguous role both with the team teachers and, perhaps because of that, with the students as well. It was unclear what her job was. In addition to handling a variety of administrative details, she spent much of the first few months attempting to discipline the students, to help control the big room so that others could teach classes there. Most of her relationships with students were in this negative vein; when placed in charge of the skills time, she had much to rectify in the students' attitudes toward her. From observations taken at the time, it also appeared that the consultant was made the scapegoat by the team. Her relationship with the students was "worse" than anyone else's, so that although a team member's interaction with students might be bad, it was not as bad perhaps as the consultant's.

Hal later sought to explain the problems the team had with the consultant this way:

> I felt that there were problems because of two things: one, because the consultant didn't know what she was doing here, and we didn't know either, and the kids didn't either right from the very beginning. Now on top of that there were problems because of her own attitudes that she admitted she had. Like she said, I don't know if I can work with you people because your approach is different. And that's when the problem came to a head.
>
> But I think that might have been avoided if from the very beginning she had been with us--a member of the team--and had been working with the kids all the time, as an equal, which she wasn't. She was

> a helper, and a person who rang the bells, and stuff like that. As far as the kids were concerned, that's what she was; they didn't know who she was in the miniteam. So if we had made a good start with her, I think that that problem might not have happened.
>
> On the other hand, she was right when she said she felt she wasn't working in concert with us.
>
> Taped Interview
> May, 1971

Resolution of the interpersonal tension was triggered by a specific incident between the consultant and a student. In attempting to discipline a student during skills time (a student with a history of problems with authority) a really explosive situation developed. The girl followed the consultant into the hall yelling at her loudly, calling her incredible names, most of them violently obscene. The shouting was so loud that all classes in the building were interrupted, and teachers and students spilled into the hall to find out what had happened.

Everyone's emotions were too intense at that moment for a coherent explanation of the incident to be put forth. What was evident in the other teachers' actions was an immediate, perhaps subconsciously-motivated willingness to take the student's side.[18]

None of the support the team automatically gave each other in similar situations was evidenced the morning of this incident for the consultant. If it had not been for the astonishment of the NTA who had witnessed the entire incident, heard what the student had said to the consultant, and then watched the lack of appropriate response on the part of the other teachers, the team might never have uncovered the true story of what had happened. When the story came out, the team planned to suspend the girl but even that was never carried out because, they explained, the consultant was "sick the following week" and so would not have been there to explain the suspension to the mother.

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[18] Later one of the Antioch students attempted coolly to offer the consultant some advice about handling students in a tense situation. The team in general acted as though the incident had been handled incorrectly and the fault lay with the consultant.

The consultant was thinking seriously of quitting the team after this incident. In the midst of the uproar before things were settled, she explained in an interview the way she felt:

> I've been teaching in the schools for twelve years, in a relatively traditional situation, but I never believed that I had what I would consider a very tight classroom...I always had warm relations with the students I worked with, but of course, I always reached or had a relationship with my students through my subject matter. And this was how we established it; it was almost a medium through which we established a warm relationship, whereas, of course, I don't have that here.
>
> But it seemed to me, nevertheless that I was coming across situations that really bugged me. I mean, kids whose attitudes were such that I personally could not accept them. And I felt somehow that when I would confront youngsters, because I would not pass it by or make light of it, that I was in effect sort of sabotaging. No one has overtly said this to me but I sense that I am in a way sabotaging the efforts of these teachers who apparently feel that I am making a big thing out of something that could have been passed off more easily.
>
> Taped Interview
> March, 1971

At the same time, though independently, both the team and the consultant decided that they would like to have a meeting to explore the consultant's relationship to the team. Again with Shapiro's help, the team began a discussion of the consultant's realtionship to the team during one of their regular

Monday meeting times. The discussion was not terribly satisfactory. Notes made after the meeting help explain the interaction:

> Everyone quite tense about this meeting--labelled "confrontation" by both sides. Never came to a confrontation. Felt that neither side said what they really felt. Consultant continually asking for group to relieve her of the ambivalence of her position--go or stay, which? Group unwilling or unable to do that. Lots of flights into more specific problems which were resolvable: big room, contracts, rather than face the interpersonal problems involved.
>
> Observation Notes, North
> March, 1971

At the end of this first meeting, the group decided to have another three-hour meeting away from the building to discuss the consultant/team relationship and other matters they needed to talk about.

The three-hour meeting, with both sides feeling nervous and anxious about a confrontation, resolved the tension but without the outright discussion everyone expected. The problem was sort of "talked around" but no one actually revealed the depth of his feeling; notes made at the time indicate that "maybe it (the lack of direct discussion) was a good thing, because it looked as though they had discussed it just by coming that close to what was a very dangerous subject. They all felt they had handled it."

Following the meeting it was amazing to see the change in the interaction between the team and the consultant. Whereas before she had always sat on the outskirts of the group, and, though vocal, had had to insert her comments from the distance of her remote relationship with the team, she then began sitting on the corner of one of the teacher's desk, participating actively. The relationship never became truly warm in spite of this change in observable behavior, but it was at least functional, and both the consultant and the team could make use of the other as resources.

Further Developments on the Relationship with the System

The question of the continuation of the annex remained unresolved and unsettling. Following the meeting with the parents and their subsequent telephone calls to the District Superintendent's office, the team was notified in mid-March that the annex would be continued. They were told in fact that they should submit requisitions for supplies for next year. (Little of the equipment they had ordered for the present year had ever arrived, including the lockers.) The team was excited for, at the beginning of March, they had had a meeting with the principal in which they stated directly that they all (with the exception of Edith, who was moving) wanted to teach in an annex next year and that, despite the physical problems of this building, they wanted to continue there.

The excitement was short lived. On April 12, following the spring vacation, the team received another phone call and this time they were told that it "looked as if there won't be an annex next year." It was reported to them that an important meeting was held over the spring holidays between the District Superintendent and several School District administrators at which it was decided that the annex would not be continued. The main reasons for the decision apparently were the complaints of one of the neighbors who lived next to the synagogue, and the cost of repairs to the building necessitated by the presence of the school. The final decision concerning the future of the annex rested with the School Board's ability to break the three-year lease with the synagogue.

Through the beginning of April the future looked bleak. The team called once more for parental support and the parents responded by sending a delegation of visitors to the District Superintendent's office to express their approval of the annex program, particularly with its new emphasis on reading and skills. The team made attempts to come up with plans to save the annex; most of their plans were not well-organized or confidently proposed. For the most part they involved trying to bring in reporters or friendly editorial writers to help muster community support for the annex.

In April the District Superintendent decided to visit the annex again. Again she came unannounced; this time, according to Edith, who was there, two teachers were out of the building on field trips with their students and the big room was more than normally rowdy. (For most of the visit, Edith remained unaware of the presence of the District Superintendent). The only class the District Superintendent saw was one being managed by an Antioch student, but she did stay longer than her first visit, long enough to see the students' behavior during break time, when "the kids came roaring out of the walls in their usual way to throw balls in the building and yell and scream, unaware of their important visitor." (from notes made after a conversation with Edith).

In spite of her experience, the District Superintendent sent several visitors during the next few weeks who spent time at the annex observing classes, and then reporting their observations to the superintendent. One visitor (principal of a new school) told the North principal that his reaction had been, "I've got a school built for miniteams; if I can get my staff to work like those teachers in a year, I'll be happy." Another visitor was very excited by the observations and said that she had reported to the District Superintendent that there was a lot of "structure" to the program. At the same time, the delegation of parents paid their visit to the superintendent's office and expressed their views.

The extent of the influence these visitors or the parents had on the final decision may never be known. It could well be that the School Board found itself unable to break the lease. For whatever reasons the final decision made at the end of April was for the continuation of the annex for another year. The lift that decision gave to the teachers was enough to carry them through the rest of the year in very good shape. From May until the end of June there was a period of intense involvement and enthusiasm from both students and teachers.

The Final Months

The Overall Program

The new program of reading and skills continued to run reasonably smoothly, although it had its low points as well:

> This morning when I was coming to school (I thought) we were really far along, man, we had this skills program. Murph was ballyhooing the North Annex and everything. We had a program where kids actually had a choice about what they wanted to do and they spent an hour and a half in the room at a time with other kids and they worked on what they wanted to work on.
>
> Writer: That to you is a milestone?
>
> Hal: That is a milestone. That is a real point in history. Then this afternoon Peter (from Antioch) said he thought the skills time today was terrible and so where the hell are we?
>
> Hal, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

The confusion and the hostility students had shown and expressed in the fall were, for the most part, gone. The instructional program had achieved a rhythm of normalcy with which both teachers and students felt comfortable. Team members were aware, however, that they had not yet come as far in the instructional area as they would like to. The consultant expressed the feeling that much of the small room instruction was "dull" and that on a given day only half the students were actually involved in the skills and reading program; that is, working independently.[19] Edith complained at the end of the year about her work in her subject matter:

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[19] The fact that particular students within that 50% varied each day is important to note. It was not the same 50% each day who were involved.

> When I think of how much English I've taught, I'm really dissatisfied with the program. And I'm dissatisfied with myself because this summer I was very excited about being creative and I was going to do all these great things.

Taped Interview
May, 1971

Mike expressed the feeling that the value of the program in the annex was not so much in what they taught the students in the instructional program, as what they provided in other areas:

> I've come to the conclusion that the kids put up with us because of the other things we give them or that they get here: the freedom and the chance to argue and so forth.

He went on to talk about what he felt the students were getting from the annex experience:

> I'd say we've opened a lot of doors for a lot of kids as far as communicating among themselves, and to say, "Well, maybe there are people we can trust; maybe the adult world--the white adult world--isn't what we've been told it is." I'd say there we've made tremendous gains.

Taped Interview
May, 1971

In spite of moments of discouragement and awareness of shortcomings in the program, the teachers really knew they had come a long way since September. The atmosphere in the annex seemed changed as Mike had indicated; the change in atmosphere was evidenced in the new posters which went on the walls in the hall, posters students had made expressing opinions, and philosophical and political points of view. It was evidenced in the activity in the building after regular school hours: students in the staff room sitting in small circles talking to particular teachers, students in the big room practicing on drums for a talent show, the student council meeting late in one of the small rooms. The writer noted these changes in April:

> I certainly have a changed feeling towards the annex. I was there on a Monday and it was after school and there were kids rushing in to get various packages they'd left in there, or to complain about their lunches, to talk to Hal or Sue or Mike about a fashion show or student council meeting or anything, and to get a pencil--just a flurry of activity taking place, and a very relaxed feeling between teachers and the kids...I realized that the kids in the annex were having a far better experience than they would have had in a normal junior high school program.
>
> Taped Observations, North
> April, 1971

In an interview in the late Spring, the principal of North commented on the annex program:

> All the literature about, you know, you walk into a British school and there's a kid working in the vestibule and another one in the lobby, and another one in the cloakroom--it's happening here. And it's not happening because the principal's cracked the whip and snapped and said, "I want this to look like an informal British classroom so when visitors come through..." It is.
>
> And I'm saying that this place is a frightening experience to a person who comes in here unoriented to what has really happened here... I'm not trying to cover up: the kids do get too loud, they do run, they do shout, they do get out of hand from time to time, but so do teenagers everywhere, and in this setting it shows up a little easier because it's small.
>
> Taped Interview
> May, 1971

With the program running fairly smoothly, the team was able to turn its attention from the scheduled program to large group activities for the students. Their first trips had been necessitated by the services being held in the synagogue; they had to get out of the building. Their final trips seemed

SMALL
ROOM

AND THE
BIG ROOM

NORTH
ANNEX
IN MAY

LUNCH IN
THE BIG
ROOM

motivated out of a concern for the students and a desire to have the annex student body do things as a group. Following is a list of the trips and activities planned for the students during the final months of the year:

> Fashion show, March 9. Coordinated by Sue, students staged a fashion show (rehearsed after school) and presented it to the entire annex student body.
>
> Tour of Acme Bakery, March. Arranged in an attempt to acquaint students with industry in the neighborhood.
>
> Tour of Franklin Institute, April 22.
>
> Picnic and games in the park, May 7. Utilization of park within walking distance.
>
> Skating trip with main building, May 12. Coordinated by annex student council.
>
> Park Get Together with two other Minischools, May 19. First and only coordinated activity between minischools.
>
> Shower for Edith, May. Surprise baby shower planned by students.
>
> Tour of Central High School, May. Conducted by the consultant for those students possibly interested in applying to Central.
>
> Harbor Tour, May 24. Day long boat trip. Students paid their own way.
>
> Talent show, June 8. Coordinated by Hal, students staged talent show (rehearsed after school) and presented it to student body.
>
> Skating trip, June 15. Took place after school for those students who wanted to go as a final annex trip.

The number and variety of these activities is direct evidence of a new spirit of enthusiasm and commitment permeating the annex. Before March, they had taken trips during the times they couldn't be in the annex, and had staged a Christmas party. After March, there was so much activity (with students directly responsible for a lot of it) that it was difficult to keep track of all that was going on.

Shift in Commitment for Teachers

The goals the team had established for itself in the summer indicated the group's intention of running a child-centered school. Philosophy is sometimes very difficult to put into practice, particularly when it may not be clear how to implement a philosophical point of view. The teachers had discovered quickly in the fall that a child-centered approach (an open-classroom orientation) did not come about through intention alone. It took a great deal of work, some trial and error, and a lot of frustration to bring about a semblance of what they had written on paper in the summer.

The group may not have accomplished programmatically all or even many of the specific goals it had established; they did succeed, however, in changing their orientation toward teaching and towards children; changed it such that they became virtually as child-centered as their goals implied.

Indirect evidence of this change in attitude came from the Franklin Institute visit in late April. Edith described that visit as one of continual harrassment. As she described it, the annex was the only predominantly black school to visit that day; there were three other groups there, all from white suburban school districts. From the moment the tour began the students from the annex were blamed for any noise and any trouble. The following account is taken from the writer's notes made after the visit was related by Edith; this part of the tour involved going through a physical simulation of a heart.

> Part of the fuel for the fire was being black combined with being innovative. When the kids were told to bring a teacher back in order to be allowed to go into the heart, they rushed away saying they would get "Peter." (from Antioch) The lady (in charge of the heart) said they couldn't bring "Peter" but had to bring a teacher. The kids said Peter was a teacher. When Peter came the lady said, "Are you Peter the teacher?" and was very disapproving. The harrassment continued for the entire visit, including their time in the lunchroom where the kids did not have room to sit down and then were accused of being unruly and moving around too much.
>
> Observation Notes, North
> May, 1971

The importance of this incident lies in the fact that the teachers were supportive of the students and became very angry at the treatment the students had received. They were not angry out of embarrassment for the students' behavior; they were angry for the humiliation the students had suffered and the unfair treatment. Edith,despite the fact that she had had the least satisfying relationship with the students, found several officials of the Franklin Institute and complained. She requested that theyexplain the treatment the students were receiving. Afterwards she said that she was amazed that she had kept her temper in those conversations; she had tried diplomatically to explain the annex program as well as hear their complaints.

Edith's behavior in this instance reflects the noticeable "about-face" that had taken place within the team. She had always been one of the most discouraged about student conduct. Many times in previous meetings she had taken up much of the time complaining about the students' behavior and attitudes. The students may have been somewhat rowdy on the Franklin Institute trip; they may well have brought on themselves some of the ill treatment. It was clear, though, that the teachers felt their first allegience was to the students and that they were willing to act on their commitment.

Another example of the teachers' commitment to the students was in their desire to help the students receive proper placement in the 8th grade at North. Due to a confusing sixth-grade year at their elementary school, the students generally had scored low on the previous year's Iowa testing. Teachers at the annex felt strongly that the tests were unfair and unrepresentative of the students' abilities. These were the scores, however, which were to be used in placing the students for the following year. (If these scores had been used alone, Edith indicated that most of the students would have been placed in low sections.)

The Advancement School research program at North included the administration of a pre-post reading test (Gates-McGinitie); the annex teachers requested that they be allowed to administer the post reading test in May so that the scores could be used for grouping the students in June. They administered the tests; they hand-scored all of them; then three teachers took all the students to the park to relieve Edith who transcribed the scores so that the main building could use them. It was a massive group effort on the part of the team which had no immediate payoff except that they believed it would help the students.

The same sort of effort was put forth in June when the teachers took the students skating after school. The trip had originally been scheduled to take place during school hours; students had been told of the plans. Several days before, the team was told that it was too late to take any more trips, and the group was denied permission to go. Instead of giving the reason for cancelling the trip to the students, the team decided to go anyway...but after school. They changed everything--the plans, the reservations, the buses--and took the students to the rink from 2:30 to 5:30.

All these examples serve to illustrate the change in attitude on the part of the teachers. But perhaps the most convincing example is the fact that the group changed its entire program for the last two weeks of school.

The Last Two Weeks

On June 1st the team had stayed late for a main building activity; in comparing notes on classes and the big room activities, they came to the conclusion that the students were bored with the contracts. They decided the program needed changing. A week later a new program was in full operation. (In direct contrast to the amount of time it took them to change the program the first time.)

The new program was geared toward finishing out the school year with a flourish. June 22 was made the big day: Graduation Day, and all activities were aimed toward that day. From 9:00 to 10:30 the students had the regular program; reading if they were scheduled for the big room; double-period class if they were in the small rooms. At 10:30 everything changed; the students spent the rest of the morning working in an "interest group" they had chosen.

The interest groups were all related to the graduation day program planned by the teachers:

1) Yearbook. Mike and Peter were in charge of getting students to write articles for a yearbook to be given out the last day of school.

2) Production. Edith was in charge of students who duplicated and put the yearbook together.

3) Art Work. Hilary (the other Antioch student) was in charge of a group responsible for designing and making covers for the yearbook. The group also made art work to be displayed on the walls.

4) Awards assembly. Sue was in charge of students designing award certificates and the general format of the assembly. (The teachers had decided that every student in the annex was to receive an award.)

5) Luncheon. Each student at the annex who wanted to attend the luncheon paid fifty cents and the consultant was in charge of students who planned and carried out lunch arrangements.

6) Play. Hal worked with a group to produce a play written by his students two years ago. Annex students were to present it graduation day.

The teachers had begun the change by having the students report to homeroom during skills time, Monday, June 7th. There they had outlined the plan and described the activities, including the number of students alloted to each activity and the teacher in charge. Then they rang a bell as a signal for the students to go to the room of their first choice activity. The first students there were the ones who got it. Edith reported that the students went through the procedure with surprising orderliness; there was little pushing and shoving, no fighting and only "ten kids" who were mad because they did not get their first choice activity.

During the second week of the program the writer visited each interest group; it was obvious that the enthusiasm the students had first felt for the program was being sustained. At 10:30 students went immediately to their work rooms; throughout the annex there was a lot of activity. Students were in the staff room running off sheets on the ditto machine; students were in the hall, one group in a circle composing the class poem. In another room twenty students were quietly making covers for the yearbook; twenty more were next door copying the articles which were to go into those yearbooks. Most of the talk in the two rooms was concerned with the task--checking out a yearbook decoration, showing a teacher a correction, asking for help and advice.

In one room the consultant was working with the luncheon committee. One of the members of her committee was the girl with whom she had had the violent incident in March. The girl sat attentively, offering advice about the number of cans of juice she felt would be needed at the luncheon.

The only problem area was in the big room where Hal had the group practicing for the play. The students were unruly and loud; it was not a very productive practice session. The group continued to function that way for the rest of the week. Monday, the day before the "big day," Hal got so angry with the students he walked out, telling them there would be no play. The students decided they wanted to do it; they stayed after school and practiced, making up for a week of messing around. On graduation day the play was "marvelous."

In fact, the whole day went "marvelously," according to the team and the principal who was there to address the group. The team had invited parents and so many came (30 couples) that the luncheon committee did not have enough food to feed the committee members. Every student received his award; the room was cleared and the luncheon committee set it up for a banquet with reserved seats and served lunch; the room was cleared again and the play was presented. Yearbooks were given out in the homerooms, and students "stayed and stayed" to have their yearbooks signed.

Both teachers and students felt it had been a great day.

Year-end Reflections

In looking back over the full year at the annex, several team members had somewhat different but related viewpoints about the experience. The consultant remembered some of the more trying times:

> All I can say, it was a very hectic year, it really was. And many, many times I was just ready to give up. But it has the advantage, I suppose, you say, 'Well, I've kind of been through it and I think if I were ever to go through it again, it would be much better.'
>
> Maybe I have changed as well as other things. My tolerance of certain things may have changed, but I also think that others who have experience will be able to handle things in a way that will be less hectic now. Anything else I can't say.
>
> Taped Interview
> May, 1971

Despite those feelings, it was Hal's strong belief that it had all been necessary and somewhat unavoidable:

> We had other things to do...getting used to this place and used to the idea that we could make this place run. I mean, it's kind of amazing to me still that we were able to do it, and I think that if we had the whole year to live over again, starting out from where we were last September, I think that we would have to do most of the things we did this year. There's nothing I could say that we did this year that was unnecessary.
>
> Taped Interview
> May, 1971

Several team members and the principal recognized the importance of the group and the support they had felt being members of it. The principal saw the function of the group as a vehicle for the release of creativity, enabling the team to persevere in spite of problems:

> They have unleashed themselves; if there is such a thing as pedagogical fission--meaning the release of additional energies for better teaching--they have done it to each other. If I have provided the kind of relationship which made them feel they could get away with it, o.k., but they have done it to each other...
>
> Taped Interview
> May, 1971

Another team member welcomed the fact that she had a group of people she could rely on and lean on for support if need be:

> Writer: What was the value of the team to you?
>
> Sue: It has been vital. I don't feel as drained as I did in the past.
>
> Writer: How do you mean drained?
>
> Sue: In other words I was doing everything alone. I had no one I could really go to. I was working alone. That's it.
>
> Sue, Taped Interview
> May, 1971

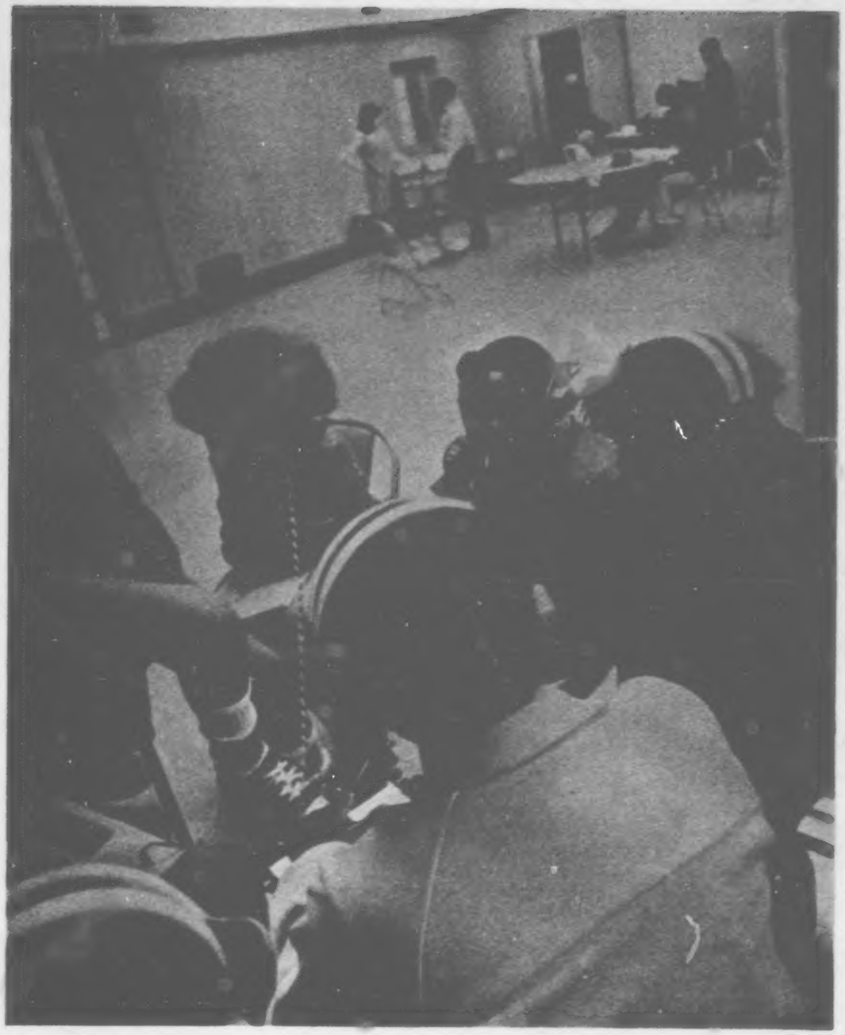
Mike summed up the feelings of most of the group in looking back and attempting to explain why he had stuck with it when he had been so ready to quit in the fall:

> Writer: Have there been times this year when you wished you were back in the main building?
>
> Mike: No, I can't once recall. I've recalled saying I'd rather be out of teaching, but I don't recall saying I'd rather be back in the main building.
>
> Writer: I'm curious about why you haven't ever wished to go back down there.
>
> Mike: Because I enjoy this. First of all I don't like to wear a tie. I like the real closeness that we have with the kids; I like the added responsibility because I think we're able to handle it. I like the

fact that we all know each other and that we work together and that nobody's on our backs about what we have to do and what we don't do. The decisions we make are our own decisions and this is our school.

And I like that.

Taped Interview
May, 1971



ACTIVITY CENTER - SKILLS TIME

NORTH ANNEX

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORY OF JEFFERSON

Summer Experience

The Team

The Jefferson team was composed of young, relatively inexperienced teachers, all of whom grew up and were educated in Philadelphia. They were a diverse group, including one teacher who, in college, had been named by Bell Telephone as one of the sixty best future physicists in the United States--and another who was attending law school part-time while he taught. Because for years Jefferson had a very stable faculty, the one team teacher who had 3½ years experience there was considered relatively "new" to the faculty.

Steve was the science teacher,[20] the teacher named a promising future physicist. He had taught at Jefferson for only one year prior to volunteering for the team but he had been connected with the Advancement School previously (his student teaching assignment had been completed at the Advancement School). Steve had found his first-year teaching experience difficult but not discouraging; during his first year he had established a science club which met after school, helping him to know the students in a more relaxed way. From the beginning he was looked on as a leader by the group although he later stated that he had tried hard not to assume this role automatically. His leadership when it was offered was geared more to programmatic decisions and not to interpersonal aspects of team functioning.

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[20] Again pseudonyms have been substituted with beginning letters identical to subject matter: Steve is the science teacher, Elaine the English teacher, Helen in history and Mel in math.

Elaine was the English teacher on the team. She had more teaching experience at Jefferson than anyone else on the team; she was beginning the second half of her fourth year. She had begun teaching in the middle of the year, and her first experience was with students who had "gotten rid of" two teachers before her that year. She said that she had really hated the students, that it was a very rough year but that she stayed with it because of the support of the principal and the rest of the faculty. She had also served on a team at Jefferson before but the experience had not been very successful; in fact, she had been the team leader but she said that by Christmas the group was not doing much together.

At the start of the PAS program, Elaine played a passive role on the team. She tended to say the least of any team member and to agree with any decision the rest of the group made. Her commitments to program or philosophy did not seem very strong although she seemed interested in the discussion.

Like Steve, Mel was beginning his second year of teaching. He was the math teacher, even though he was not certified to teach math in Philadelphia; he had come to Jefferson on a temporary emergency certificate. He had volunteered for the team mainly for the money and the summer work. He had actually been second in line for the math position but the person originally selected had been unavailable.

Mel's greatest interest in the team seemed to be in the access it provided him to interesting math curricula at the Advancement School. He did not participate very actively in those team discussions which did not seem to him to be directly related to needs of the classroom. He was the least involved of the four in the necessity for building a strong, unified team spirit, or a closer-working group.

The history teacher, Helen, was the only black member of the group; she was beginning her third year at Jefferson and her teaching experience had been generally successful. She had always prided herself on running a "tight ship" and tended to rely on more traditional methods of teaching. However, she was interested in finding more exciting materials and activities, an interest manifested by her voluntary attendance the year before at a six-week workshop on academic games run by the Advancement School. She was one of the teachers the principal had directly recruited for the team; she had not initially volunteered. Occasionally she assumed some leadership of the team and she was always an active participant.

With the team for the summer was the vice-principal at Jefferson. He had spent most of his School District career at Jefferson; he had been a science teacher there for eleven years, and vice principal for four years. At the end of the summer he was named principal (the previous principal had resigned in June).

Although all the negotiations about the team and its composition had been between the previous principal and the Advancement School, the vice-principal was "fully briefed" at the beginning of the summer and seemed to have little difficulty adapting to the summer program or the team concept. He assumed leadership of the group right away, steering them in directions he thought would be fruitful to their planning. At the same time he participated fully in the entire summer program, joining an English workshop (although not in his subject area) and becoming as involved as the English teachers themselves were.

The consultant for the Jefferson team was named the second week of the summer--prior to that the team had been functioning without a consultant. She was to be with them for the rest of the summer and the school year. She was the same age as the team and had also grown up and been educated in Philadelphia; her presence gave the group two black members, a proportion more representative of the Jefferson faculty as a whole. For the two years she worked at the Advancement School, she was first a science teacher and then an administrator of a highly successful Advancement School "team"--a small group of PAS teachers and students who worked together in a self-contained setting within the school. This was her first experience with the Advancement School external program and her first opportunity to work in a junior high school.

Expectations for the Summer

> This summer was the most beneficial summer I have spent. It helped me improve my teaching methods and I have never met so many interesting people as I did this summer.
>
> Elaine, Written Questionnaire
> November, 1970

Most of the other team members also felt that the most important part of the summer for them was the material they got in their subject matter workshops. (Steve was the exception because of his prior contact with PAS materials.) Part of their enthusiasm for the curricula could have stemmed from a lack of awareness of the concept of a team or minischool. None of the other schools had a firm grasp of the minischool idea, but Jefferson was operating at an even greater disadvantage:

First, the principal who had established the team, and presumably knew what he had in mind for it to do, had left the school. The team felt insecure about its position in the school, expressed the first time they were together during the summer. They feared that a new, unsympathetic principal could, if he chose, dissolve their team altogether or make working conditions intolerable. (The new principal was not appointed until _the end_ of the summer program.) This problem lent an air of uncertainty to their planning; it was possible that all the planning in the summer could come to naught in the fall.

Their second disadvantage, was the fact that there was little in their physical situation which helped them define themselves as a team. Their classrooms were spread over three floors of a four-story building (only two rooms were adjacent) and their schedule allowed them only forty-five minutes of meeting time a week. Joe Prusan reported that they had had the opportunity to choose rooms close together but had not done so because they did not want to give up "favorite rooms." (Their reluctance to part with an accustomed room could in part have been due to their uncertain position vis-a-vis the then unnamed principal; if he dissolved their team, at least individuals could still remain in rooms they wanted.)

A final factor operating as a limitation on their planning as a team was a sense of anxiety about the reactions of the rest of the Jefferson faculty. Before they had made their first plan, at the initial meeting of the summer, the group expressed concern about the "resistance" of what they termed "traditional" teachers at Jefferson. (It was unclear how, or in what regard this resistance might be manifested.)

The anxiety from these sources led the group away from team-oriented, joint projects to more curriculum-centered individual work. They spent the first task of a planning session not doing the task but getting to know each other by swapping stories about various students they had all taught. There was a "wait-and-see" attitude about the group, although their involvement picked up greatly when the subject-matter workshops began.

The principal (then the vice-principal) later expressed his feelings about the summer program and prior expectations in a way which must have been similar to the rest of the group's:

> Actually I didn't know enough about PAS or the miniteam approach to have any expectations at all. I simply tried to go in open-minded and see what the aims might be and then see how we might effect realization of aims when we returned to school. So, I had no preconceived notion at all about what to expect, I just took things as they came and I thought it was extremely interesting and I'd love to see it done again and I'd like to involve more of our people in it regardless of whether they're really going to participate in any team-type approach to teaching.

When asked about the value of the summer, he also named first the material and ideas gained from the specific workshops:

> ...the exposure to teaching techniques after having had a chance to try their own, made them extremely susceptible to new techniques. I think each of the persons involved was at a phase of their careers where they would be very susceptible to new techniques and practices.

Principal, Jefferson
Taped Interview
November, 1970

Goals

The team's selection of goals tended, as might be expected, to be in line with their curricular orientation. They tended to choose very cognitive goals for their team (but not to choose very appropriate means for the realization of those goals). Their primary concern seemed to be to insure that they would be able to teach the new material they had gotten from the Advancement School workshops. (This was particularly true of math and history; in history Helen prized all the units of study she had received and was making plans for ordering films to be used with them. Mel thought the math workshop leader a "genius" and was not going to let anything keep him from using the materials he had gained.)

Given their individual, subject-matter orientation, there was a natural bent to choose goals which seemed to require the least amount of interference in their lesson plans. Their planning time during the summer was dominated by the attempt to relate their subject areas. The meetings and the exercises were planned for the most part by the vice-principal in conjunction with the PAS consultant.

They were steered by the vice-principal to a book on thinking skills[21] and by the end of the summer had chosen as their primary goal the development of the thirteen thinking skills listed in the book.[22] These skills were to be the basis for curricular interrelationship.

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[21] Raths, Louis; Wasserman, S.; Jonas, Arthur and Rothstein, Arnold, Teaching for Thinking: Theory and Application, Charles E. Merril Publishing Co., New York, 1967.

[22] Comparing-Contrasting
Criticizing
Collecting
Hypothesizing
Assuming
Summarizing
Imagining
Deciding
Applying
Observing
Interpreting
Organizing
Designing

One afternoon while the group had a reading workshop the consultant and the principal went through the curriculum guides for the School District to find commonalities between the subject areas. The next day the group talked about how lessons could interrelate and then used the guides to select possible lessons for the fall. Additionally they used the curriculum guides to list further skills to be taught for each area and the principal encouraged the group to visit the School District's Pedagogical Library to get more help with their subject areas. All of the work they were doing tended to stress the cognitive area and tended to have a curricular orientation. From not being certain what a minischool was, they seemed to have moved toward a definition which stressed an overlap in subject area. That orientation is evident in the final list of goals they chose:

JEFFERSON GOALS, July, 1970

GOALS	EVALUATIVE TECHNIQUE
1. To develop thinking skills.	To administer a pre-post thinking skills test.*
2. To work to raise each child's reading score one grade level.	To test with California Reading Test, Iowa and/or other tests.
3. To enhance teacher self-development.	Self-evaluation; Pupil evaluation.
4. To improve student attitude towards school.	Compare behavior, attendance and promptness, use behavior chart.

*Thinking Skills Test was devised by the team over the summer to be administered in the fall.

It is evident that this list of goals is too general to be of much concrete help; for these goals to be achieved, the means for attaining them must be carefully thought out and planned. The idea that a group of teachers can integrate their subject areas through common emphases on various thinking skills is an intriguing one. It is also a very difficult one. To bring about this kind of conceptual integration of curriculum requires hard work and a lot of time spent analyzing subject matter in a manner foreign to most teachers: analyzing subject matter for those particular thinking skills inherent in certain activities and lessons.

Looking back over the summer's choice of goals, the consultant later remarked that she thought the goals themselves were very realistic but that "someplace along the line we forgot about how we attain them, or our means for attaining them were lost in the shuffle or they were not clearly thought out. The goals I think were clearly thought out but the means were not. They were given lip service." (Taped Interview, June, 1971)

In fact, the group spent more time developing the thinking skills test to evaluate how well the skills had been taught, than they spent on developing means for joint emphasis so that the skills could be taught.[23]

Programmatic Decisions

In line with their major orientation toward overlapping subject areas the team spent time during the summer developing a tentative schedule for the year. Their earliest decision was that they would continue to teach basic skills in their classes the way they had before; they planned to combine developmental work (team work) and work on the basic skills by teaching separately the basic skills in their subject areas for the first three months and then spending the last six months on developmental team work. The schedule was devised so that the teachers could know ahead of time what other team members would be teaching and could plan ways to relate to it.

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[23] The lack of real understanding of (or maybe commitment to) the goals they had chosen is evidenced as well in Mel's behavior during a reading workshop held for the team; he read a comic book throughout the discussion of how to raise students' reading levels.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE---JEFFERSON, July, 1970

September
Focus:
  Basic skills for specific subject areas.
  Social Studies--longitude and latitude, weather, climate, map skills.
  Math--add, subtract, multiply and divide.
  English--Dictionary, reference materials, directions.
  Science--math skills, experimental procedure, latitude, longitude, weather.

October - Christmas
Focus:
  Social Studies--the city, urban environment, Seattle case study.
  Math--percentages, graphs, decimals, fractions.
  English--subject area vocabulary.
  Science--climate, air, water, land, pollution.

January
Focus:
  Social Studies--People unit, minority groups.
  Math--distance, measurement, word problems.
  English--composition, vocabulary.
  Science--solar system, earth.

February
Focus:
  Social Studies--Afro-American History.
  Math
  English--poetry.
  Science--plants.

March
Focus:
  Social Studies--countries of Eastern Hemisphere (other cultures).
  Math--money, geometry.

English--sentences, stories, composition.
Science-animals.

April
Focus:
Social Studies--countries of Eastern Hemisphere (other cultures).
Math
English-vocabulary.
Science--ecology.

May
Focus:
Social Studies--animal unit.
Math--miscellaneous.
English--animal stories.
Science-human biology and psychology, animals.

June
Focus:
Social Studies--animal unit, gang unit.
Math--games.
English--games.
Science--human biology, psychology, animals.

From reading the tentative schedule, the assumption is that the blanks and unspecified sections were to be filled in. Perhaps that was intended; it was never carried further than as it is outlined here. Later in the year Helen and Steve responded to questions about interdisciplinary work by saying that the team was "working well as scheduled." It is this schedule which was referred to.

In addition to overlapping content areas, team members were also interested in establishing a consistent policy toward discipline. The group spent one morning deciding on acceptable and non-acceptable behavior from students. They listed on a blackboard all the ways a student could misbehave and then listed an appropriate punishment beside each offense. The consultant reported that hitting students was one suggested method of discipline to which no one objected; however, the team felt afraid to list it outright and so listed it as "miscellaneous punishment." They also talked about making one team member responsible for a certain kind of discipline. Mel later in the year expressed his feeling that they should have devised an even more uniform system of discipline, but said he understood by then that "some teachers just can't manage some kinds of discipline."

The only non-subject matter, non-administrative activity the group worked on during the summer was a day-long planning session for a camping trip for the students in the fall. The following June Mel expressed the strong feeling that that had been a wasted day, that the group knew while the planning was taking place that the trip was unlikely:

> I know we spent like two days talking about what they're going to eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner; and then the first week of school we said to the kids, 'If you're good, we're going to take you camping' or something like that. And that was the end of it and we never followed it up. Now that might have been our fault, but I don't think we ever would have been able to get a place, or a time or that we all would have been able to go.
>
> Taped Interview
> June, 1971

Steve viewed the purpose of that planning day differently, feeling that everyone always knew the trip would not come off:

> It was more like a game day; its useful function was in group cohesiveness rather than planning for a camping trip. We all had a lot of fun planning what we were going to eat and not bothering how we were going to get there.
>
> Taped Interview
> June, 1971

Later all the team members including Mel remarked that an additional value of the summer (after their curriculum workshops) was the fact that the group learned to work together:

> I think the biggest accomplishment of the summer was learning to work with the people I'm working with. Whereas I think if you just throw four teachers together, you don't give them a chance to acclimate themselves, they're going to be in trouble.
>
> Mel, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

As Elaine later said (in March) they were "lucky": "We never had any personality conflicts either, we were always able to get along, which I heard was not so true in some other schools; there were some clashes."

By the end of the summer the group had had its fears about a new principal assuaged; not only was the new principal going to be receptive to their team, the group had the advantage of having worked closely with him all summer. They no longer had to worry about a stranger. Their ideas about a team still seemed rather narrow, perhaps due to their slow beginning; the test of whether the cognitive overlap would be enough to keep them functioning in a unified manner would come in the fall.

Theirs was not an ambitious plan; the objectives were limited but perhaps if the plans were carried out fully they would at least provide students with a better experience than they normally get in junior high school. At most they might break down a few of the barriers which exist between different subject matter classes.

The Fall

General Information

Several factors were evident the first day of the new school year which were bound to make things a little more difficult during the year.

The first was that, in spite of an awareness brought about by the summer of the importance of proximity, the teachers were spread all over the building. The two female teachers were across the hall from each other on the first floor; the math teacher was on the third floor and the science teacher on the fourth. (The principal later revealed that the math teacher had been offered a room in September on the first floor with the other two but would not move down because he liked the room he had; because of gas and water facilities, the science room had to remain on the fourth floor.)

A second factor was the team's decision to include an additional section in the minischool. All the teachers had been rostered to teach the same five sections, but the Advancement School concept of a minischool had specified four teachers with four sections of students. (All other minischools in the program had only four sections of students.) Jefferson had not made the same arrangement for its minischool.

Each teacher had an advisory section; these four advisory sections made up the primary team. But in addition, they had been rostered another section. The group made the decision that this section (7-5) should be included in the minischool, even though the advisory teacher would not be on the team. This decision meant that there were approximately 175 students in the Jefferson minischool, a group generally too large and unwieldy for the planning of trips or large group activities.

Another factor affecting the potential of the team was the lack of similarity in their rosters. (Again they operated differently from the other teams in the PAS program; other teams had blocks of time allotted to them for teaching and for meeting.) The four teachers were free during the third period (the seventh graders' thirty-minute lunch period), but the thirty minutes generally was spent on small administrative matters and was almost never used to discuss general issues. They had one common period free per week; this was their scheduled meeting time, a period of forty-five minutes in which to do all their planning. Otherwise there was no overlap in their schedules; each teacher had periods free but they did not coincide with any other team member's free periods. The only benefit the free periods could have to the team was if the teachers used them to observe another team member's classes.

Initial Excitement

In spite of all these handicaps the team began the year in high spirits. In November the principal described their beginning in this way:

> I think each of them learned a great deal this summer; they learned some new things and they're trying to put them into practice. So I think it's doing a lot for the kids and for the teachers. The kids get more because the teachers are really giving more...it's just that they've learned, they've concentrated, they've been thinking about things that they wanted to do ever since June; ever since we've started talking about it, they've been thinking about things that they wanted to do.
>
> And they learned some new things up at PAS. Now they're putting them into practice. They were

> actually chaffing at the bit to get into the classroom in September.
>
> Taped Interview
> November, 1970

There was a good feeling around the school as a whole; the minischool felt especially good because the student response to being told they were in a team was very positive and excited. One team member described the way the students responded to the idea:

> I can't get quite what they think of it. I know that they like it; they think it's great, but I don't quite understand why they think it's great. It could be we've sort of conditioned them: You know, when you're in the minischool this is good. So they all think, boy, we're in the minischool and this is good. But nobody knows why.
>
> Steve, Taped Interview
> November, 1970

Another team member related an incident which had happened the first few days of school when a vice-principal had asked a student which section he was in. His reply: "Oh, I'm in the miniteam." The teacher commented that the students all felt a part of the team; but not a "super, duper special team." They were just glad to be in the minischool.

It was also exciting being a part of a new project. The principal discussed the team and its plans at the first faculty meeting, so the whole school knew about them. In the general confusion of the beginning of the year--with new teachers coming in and forms to fill out, rooms to get ready, etc.--the team teachers were different. They were pretty settled and had a plan for the rest of the year.

> The teachers know each other; in a large school situation it's always difficult when teachers have to sort of get along with other teachers. There's a hustle and bustle, each teacher has their requirements

> that they must meet...And I think the larger the school, the more crowded the school, the more difficult it is for teachers to get along well because they tend to get in each other's way. But in this circumstance each person gives a little more of himself and so it makes for better interpersonal relationships.
>
> Principal of Jefferson
> Taped Interview
> November, 1970

The reaction the group expected from the "traditional" faculty did not materialize and the team members were surprised and pleased. Helen said that she "expected people to knock it and I'm surprised that they didn't, they really didn't. And even the teachers feel as though the miniteam is a special group." She went on to say that some faculty would even say things in passing in the hall about having seen some of "the minikids" during the day. The only objection from the faculty came when Elaine changed the arrangement of the chairs in her room:

> I'm doing a lot of different things that I didn't do before. For instance I always wanted my room in a horseshoe. I didn't want the same arrangement, row by row by row, and I was really getting frustrated last year in the middle of the year because I wanted to change my room but I did have to keep in mind that other teachers used my room when I wasn't there and it would really be unfair to them to change it in the middle of the year. So I made up my mind that going into September I was going to have my arrangement.
>
> Well, one teacher walks in, you know, who's been here for a while--walks in one day and says, 'Huh, is this your seating arrangement?' I said, 'Yes, it is.' So she says to me 'Well, you know this makes it kind of hard on the floaters.' I said, 'Well, I was in a special program this summer and the principal gave me permission to have my room this way.' And that was it, she didn't say anything else.
>
> Elaine, Taped Interview
> November, 1970

The teacher did say something else but the impact was not too serious--she started calling the minischool the "minicircus," "with the circles and the funny-shaped chairs."

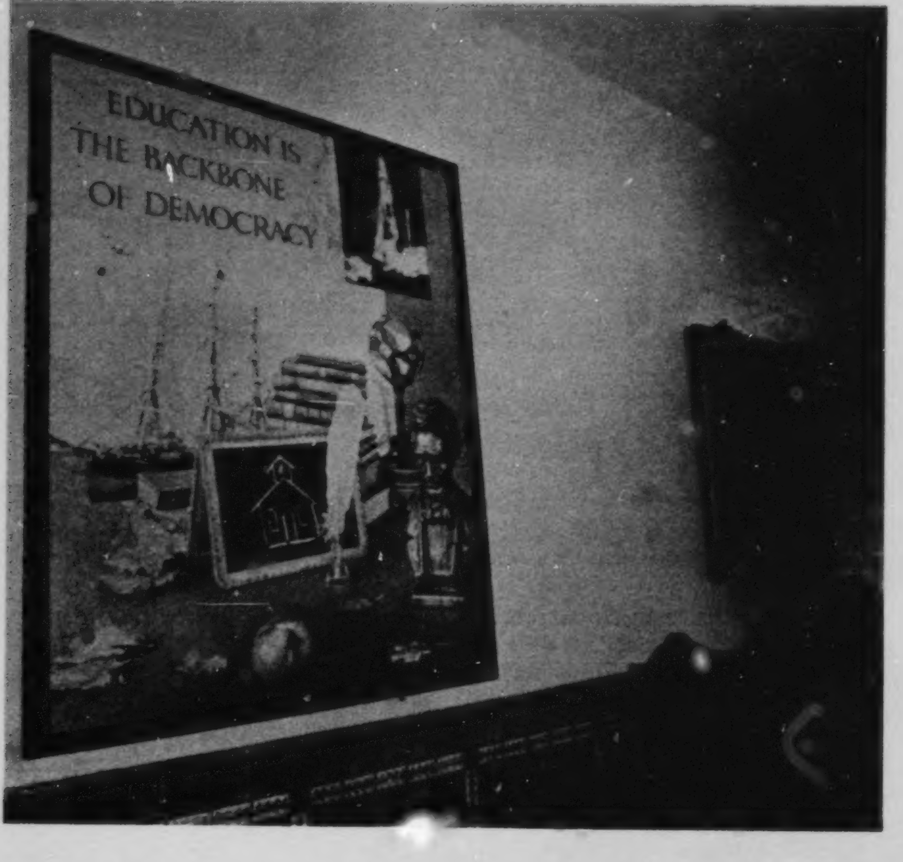
The team, except for a few similar incidents, was functioning well. With a new principal, there was a good tone to the school as a whole and it helped accentuate the way the team felt:

> I think that Jefferson is an oasis, children, parents and teacher-wise. The surrounding schools are having their share of problems, but for some reason--and I hate to even vocalize it because it could have a jinxing effect--but we have managed somehow throughout the years to keep some very dedicated people and I'm happy to say a goodly portion of our teachers are really dedicated. The kids? Well, you know they have their problems, but by and large our kids are really fabulous people and the parents are very interested.
>
> Principal of Jefferson
> Taped Interview
> November, 1970

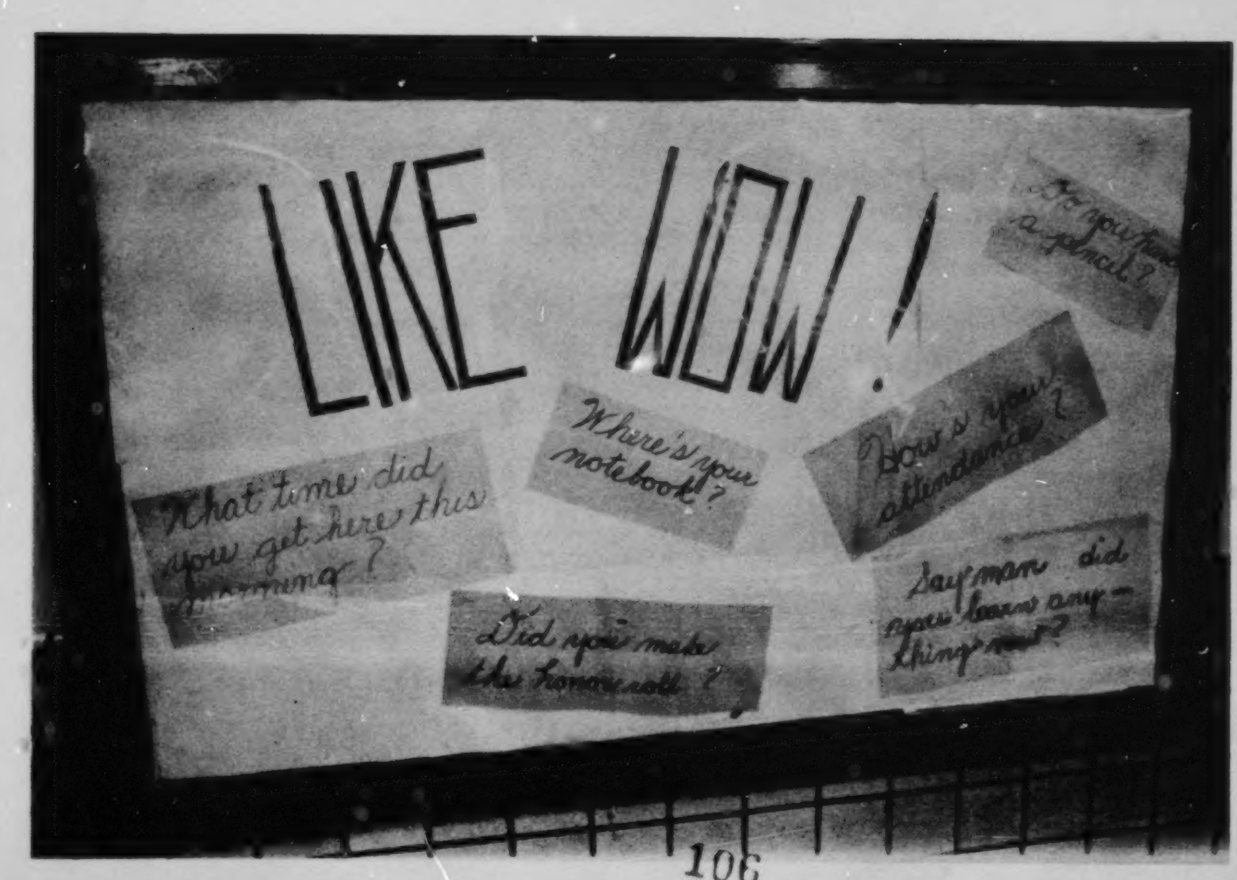
Classes

The team had agreed to begin by teaching skills they felt were basic to their individual subject areas, and that is how they began. There was remarkable consistency from room to room in class organization. Rather than being a practice the team had agreed upon during the summer, it appeared later that this is a uniform procedure in most Jefferson classes.

The procedure is as follows: students come into the classroom in an orderly manner and there is pre-class work on the blackboard, usually about 10-15 minutes worth. The expectation is that the students will go quietly to their desks, sit down and begin the work; in this way the proper tone is established


EDUCATION IS
THE BACKBONE
OF DEMOCRACY

JEFFERSON


LIKE WOW!
Do you have a pencil?
Where's your notebook?
How's your attendance?
What time did you get here this morning?
Say man did you learn anything new?
Did you make the honor roll?

right away. After pre-class time, the teacher reviews the pre-class work or reviews the homework. The review is accomplished by calling on students and when students respond, checking off their names in the rollbook so that they get "credit." (This leads students to raise their hands eagerly when a question is asked and to attempt every question because the credit is given for trying, not being correct.) Students are seated alphabetically, in rows (or a circle in Elaine's class), to facilitate the teacher's checking off the names. Following the review time, the teacher moves into the main lesson, usually involving some demonstration at the board. The main lesson takes up the last twenty to twenty-five minutes of the period.

The minischool teachers generally followed the procedure outlined above. A student had no trouble identifying what was expected of him in each class:

> The Jefferson kids are all settled. Now the question is who's going to play by the system all the time, who might break the rules at some time, who's in a good mood and going to go along or who's in a bad mood and going to be a problem that day. There's no problem with general lack of understanding of the system itself or how it works or what is expected. That's settled, done, set for the rest of the year.
>
> Taped Observation, Jefferson
> October, 1970

There were two deviations from the established classroom procedure. First, the teachers did not give books. This was terribly important to the students, some of whom felt initially that not having books was proof that the minischool students were "dumb." Teachers expected to be doing developmental work as soon as the basic skills were covered. Books would only be needed for the first few months and the teachers did not feel it was worth going through the procedure of handing out books if they were to be collected that quickly. In addition, most expected to be doing Advancement School curricula and therefore not to have need of the regular textbooks.

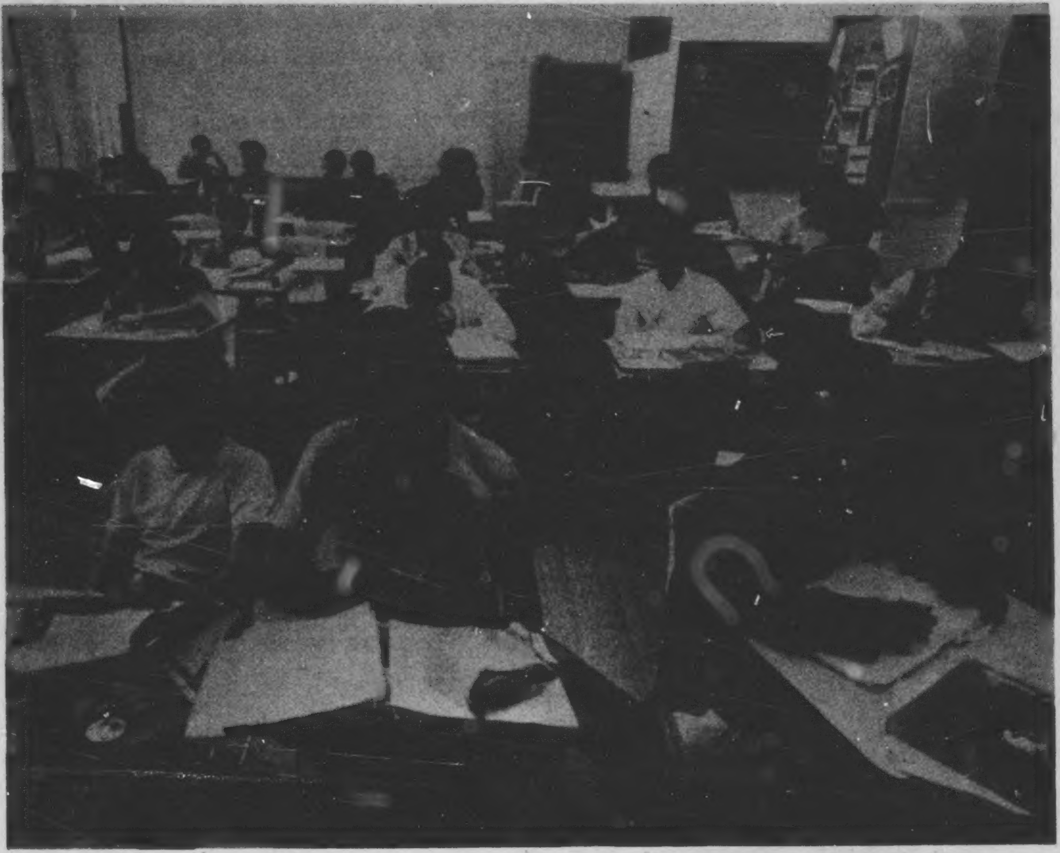
The second deviation was that the team teachers occasionally had the students work in groups. During the main lesson time they would sometimes have the students move their desks to get into groups of four or five to complete a worksheet together. Other than those two variations, the procedure was identical from class to class (in all liklihood, similar to most other classes at Jefferson) and the same procedure was being followed in February when the classes were visited extensively for two weeks by the writer.

The classes were also consistent in terms of behavioral expectations for the students, just as the team had planned during the summer.

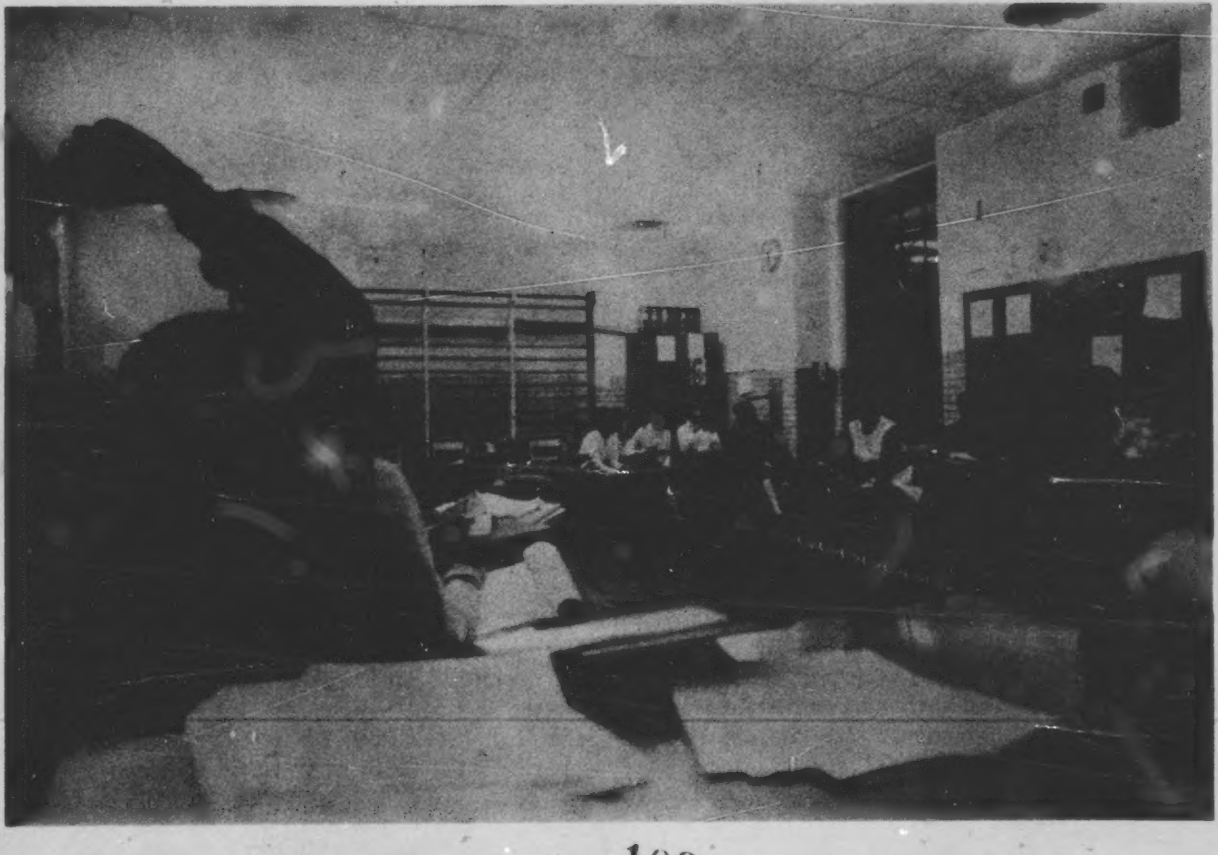
> One good thing our team decided to do, and that is we wanted to start off pretty much the same way as we always do. That is, we wanted to start off fairly strict, at least for a couple of weeks to show the kids that we really were no pushovers, and really tell them nothing about the team for a little bit of time, and then when we thought we had them the way they're supposed to be, then sort of relax.
>
> Mel, Taped Interview
> November, 1970

The behavior of the students responded to this consistency in expectations. Following is an excerpt from an account dictated by the writer after visiting one of the team classes, the Wednesday morning advisory period:

> A lot of the stuff in advisory took a great deal of time. Elaine at her desk looking through papers, giving out forms, checking off things in her rollbook. And during all that time, it must have taken up a half an hour or more, there was no talking from the kids. There didn't seem to be a military strained silence, but they did what they were expected to



CLASSES



> do. They sat at their desks quietly, mamy of them not even reading or doing anything--just sitting.
>
> Taped Observations, Jefferson
> October, 1970

Team Work

> I would say the biggest differences for me are that one I feel accountability, I feel there's a little bit more pressure on me in that I'm kind of accountable to the rest of the people on the team. I teach different--my method of teaching is changed from last year. The things I taught last year I'm teaching different this year. The atmosphere in my class is a little different.
>
> Mel, Taped Interview
> November, 1970

Although the team members when they first met together in the fall did not seem to know quite what they were supposed to talk about or use the meeting time for (at one meeting Mel came into the faculty lounge and sat with a different group of people, apparently having forgotten about the team meeting), they did engage in several team-related activities. When one of the team sections was having difficulties with a minor subject class, Steve sent a note to Elaine, who had the group the next period. She devoted the entire period to talking to them about their difficulties in that class and having them list ways it could be improved.

The consultant took over one of Mel's classes to demonstrate ways students could be taught in groups. She convinced Elaine to let the students move around to help each other in class. The consultant also had their thinking skills test duplicated; she and the team administered it to all of the minischool classes and several additional sections which served as a control group.[24]

The biggest thing they did together as a team was a large group activity planned for October 14. This was to be the first time the entire minischool had gotten together, with all the teachers and all 175 students. The only area at Jefferson large enough to allow that many students to move around was the roof, a wire enclosed rooftop basketball court and gym area. The team took all the students up there, split them into "birthday groups" or "month groups" so that the sections would be mixed up, and tried to give the groups a series of "getting to know you" questions to stimulate conversation. Elaine had composed a minischool song for the students to learn, and she and Helen tried to teach the students the song.[25]

There were several problems connected with the activity. The primary problem was its novelty to the students. The students were very excited about the activity and the excitement was expressed in noise and giggling and inattention. For teachers who were accustomed to immediate and automatic control in their classrooms, the lack of attention on the part of the students was frustrating and upsetting. They had brought a megaphone with them and continually tried to call for the group's attention. They got through the first few conversation questions, tried the song, got through about one verse, consulted with each other for several minutes and then decided that that was enough.

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[24] The intended value of the test--to assess growth in thinking skills over the course of the year--was removed when the team decided not to administer a post test at the end of the year.

[25]Minischool Song (Tune: I'll Never Fall In Love Again)

We're glad that we're in the minischool
We have so much fun in every class
I hope every subject that I pass
I will pass it with an A or B
I'll make my family proud of me.

Who is our friend in Room 311?
He's Mr._____ but he needs a vacation
From addition, subtraction, and multiplication
We think Mr._____ is superfine
When he shows us how to draw a straight line.

Now we know what time's all about
When we go to Mrs._____ we find out,
The time difference between France and China
And even in North and South Carolina.

When we go to English in 110A
Mrs._____ greets us with a friendly smile
To teach subject and predicate she'd walk a mile
Through thunder, rain, and ocean tide
With nouns and pronouns by her side.

Mr._____ we'd like to elect
As one of our favorites cause he lets us dissect
Pigs and frogs and worms - What a thrill!
Before June arrives we'll dissect the windowsill.

And we're proud to be in the minischool
Cause learning is fun and when June draws near
We'll hope we're in the minischool next year
We promise to let friendship grow
And get our own mini TV show.

Afterwards they were more positive in their reactions than might have been expected. Mel was the most upset, feeling that the students had made "fools" of them.

This period, through September and October, was a productive, exciting one for the Jefferson team. However, there were indications that things might get a little less smooth in the future. At the large group activity on the roof several of the students expressed feelings of hostility about Mel and his treatment of students.[26] The students also complained to each other that Mel hit students and that he hit them too hard. Some of the complaints and booing may have been triggered by the sight of Mel walking around the roof with a chair rung sticking out of his back pocket.

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[26] As each teacher's name was mentioned in the song, the students cheered except at Mel's name. When his name was mentioned there were loud boos from many students.

Period of Contradictions

The Letdown

> One of the ways I had such good attention last year and such good behavior last year was I took up the habit of a lot of teachers here in this school. I carried a stick around with me, and I used it. I've done it a few times this year and a couple of my colleagues have expressed their dissent. My reaction? I'm emotional, and first I wanted to say, well this is my way. And I thought about it, thought that maybe I could try it a different way. I'm trying to go along with everybody as much as possible.

Mel, Taped Interview
November, 1970

All the teachers in the minischool had sticks of various sizes in their classes; Mel had the largest stick, a rung from one of the desk chairs. All used or threatened to use the sticks for discipline. There was little reaction, other than jokes about the size of his stick, from the rest of the team members until Mel hit one student in his class so hard across the back of her hands that they were bruised and swollen:

> And 7-2 is a good group and Karen came to me just about in tears because he hit her because she called out of turn. They're a class where they get really interested and hung-up in a problem and you have to control it but I don't think that's a reason to hit a child--especially with a stick.

Helen, Taped Interview
November, 1970

Helen also expressed concern about how hard Mel was hitting students; she was worried that parents might come in and that the whole team would be responsible for what one team member had done. She stated that she did not know what to do; she did not want to go to the principal because she would not want "people going to (the principal) about me." But she could not really think of a way to solve the problem and did not want "to go behind his back."

She finally decided to talk to him quite directly about it in private. She expressed to him a concern that his behavior might reflect on the team and that there might be trouble with parents. Mel's initial reaction was that there would be no trouble from parents, that he had had trouble from parents last year and had weathered it; he did agree, however, for the sake of the team to try a "different way" of discipline.

The team as a whole never discussed the incident in a meeting although each member knew about what had happened. The team went into a "down" period, apparently related to Mel's behavior and the fact that the group never dealt with that behavior. The PAS consultant was finding it more difficult to work with Mel and some of her annoyance was evident in team meetings. At one meeting Mel asked her to explain why she always opposed anything he suggested.

From the near euphoria of the first month, the team seemed to enter a period where the members withdrew from each other. Team meetings dealt with surface matters and not with problems or areas of real concern to the team members. At the end of October the following notation was made by the writer after a meeting:

> The team has hit a down period or at least a period of non-growth--now is the real test of the team concept; I had the definite sense that a couple of them (Helen, Elaine, maybe Mel) are beginning to feel the team thing is too much trouble, the meetings and all. It wasn't very exciting--they talked about the same old things in the same way. Tension between (the consultant) and Mel is felt by the whole group, I think.
>
> Observation Notes, Jefferson
> October, 1970

Leadership was more and more handled exclusively by the consultant. She had taken the role of writing up an agenda for every meeting; she generally ran the meetings, introducing the topics, keeping the group to the agenda and when they digressed bringing them back to the topic at hand. When she was not present at a meeting, there tended to be much less focus to the discussion and more likelihood that the group would drift into talking about specific students.

When Mel was asked to comment in November on being a member of a team, he responded this way:

> I don't know really that we're doing that much any different than we would be doing if we had these classes without a team. That's the thing that disturbs me a little bit. I think that if we were all assigned to these sections and we weren't even told we were in a team that what would happen is we'd know each other was assigned to these sections and we'd probably talk a little about these kids between each other anyway. We haven't done anything really that much as a team.
>
> Taped Interview
> November, 1970

Helen expressed the same feeling about being on a team, that not much was changed:

> I feel just like I did last year. I did what I was supposed to do; when I wanted to bring something in or change my plan a little bit, I did it, and I do it now as long as it's to the good of the group. And I don't really feel like I'm being watched or that anybody's demanding anything of me nor do I feel that I have to keep on my toes because...I feel that as long as I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing in the best interest of my children, I'm doing my job.
>
> Taped Interview
> November, 1970

At the same time, Elaine had begun to have difficulties with her classes; she was beginning to have second thoughts about the value of the summer workshop:

> Not only me, but a few other people in the English workshop that summer came to the school this fall with all these bright new ideas, you know, and the things they were going to try out, and it just seems to me, though, that some of the things that worked there don't work here because of the large amount of class size.

Taped Interview
November, 1970

In November Elaine wrote in response to a question about her classes that some students had begun "misbehaving and quite a few were fresh." At the end of the year Elaine attributed the continuing problems in her classes to the way she had begun the year:

> At times I felt, you know, it was a little discouraging after being at PAS this summer and seeing how easy-going some of the people were there and the fantastic results they got from their children. And I came in in September--I wasn't Miss Nicey-Nicey but I wasn't, let's say, too hard on them and I'm really sorry that I wasn't.
>
> Because I think it's much better to be harder in the beginning and then soften up than to be soft in the beginning and try to get hard. I definitely feel that. I mean, look, I've been here four years and a few months now and you always hear, 'start off hard,' which most of the years I have and I really haven't had that many problems. But since this was a new program, I wanted to try a new approach.

Taped Interview
June, 1970

The Contradictions

In the midst of these second thoughts about the team and the classes, amidst indications that there might be problems the team was not discussing, all the public information continued to support the idea that they were doing well.

At the first Saturday morning meeting of all the minischools in the PAS program[27] the team emerged convinced that it was running a good program, perhaps the "best" program of all the minischools. All the other schools seemed to be having such personality problems, so much conflict between different points of view on the teams. The fact that the source of some of this conflict may have been attempts at a more ambitious program than theirs' did not occur to the Jefferson team members.

The principal termed the team "atypical" and said that he felt the other schools did not "have folks that are meshing like these folks are." Shortly after that, when asked to rank team functioning on a one to seven scale (with one being low),[28] the principal ranked the Jefferson team at 6.8, saying, "Jefferson's team approaches perfection in function because of almost perfect team spirit and orientation to the group goals."

In addition, at the end of the first report period in November, it was discovered that 70% of the seventh-grade honor roll students were from the minischool classes. While faculty grumbled that the minischool teachers graded easy, team members pointed out that being on the honor roll depended on good grades in the minor sections, something over which they had no control.

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[27] This was the first of several Saturday morning staff development sessions, conducted by the PAS external staff for all teachers in the seven on-going minischools. The sessions were planned to allow teachers a chance to share experiences and deal with common problems.

[28] Both teams in the report were periodically asked to respond in writing to certain questions. Some of the questions required evaluating certain aspects of the team on a 1-7 ranking scale.

In early November the consultant wrote the team members a memo in response to some extra effort they were taking with a "problem" group:

> I believe that all of the students are beginning to realize that their teachers care about them and are concerned about their behavior as well as their academic performance. For some of the students in 7-8 this is something new and out of the ordinary, the fact that teachers will make themselves available as well as sit down over lunch and "rap" with them.
>
> Consultant, Memo to Team
> November, 1970

Team Efforts

Most of the effort toward more team work was being coordinated by the consultant. For instance, the team planned to have lunch with 7-8, their problem group. All the teachers had difficulties with this particular section and it was suggested that the students be invited to bring their lunch to a classroom and have lunch with the teachers rather than in the lunchroom. Team members hoped that in this informal setting teachers and students could relax together and get to know each other better--which would lead to better behavior in the classroom. The consultant planned the meeting (the activities which were carried out), ran the session and then offered encouragement and support to the team members when things did not go as smoothly as they had wanted:

> Third period turned out as well as could be expected given that this was perhaps the first time students had been involved in something like this. Some of the talking and over-enthusiasm might have been expected but I feel the "relaxation" this time offered to 7-8 was very good for them.
>
> Consultant, Memo to Team
> November, 1970

The team had planned in the summer to put out a student newsletter and to send home letters to parents as a way of keeping them involved in the program. In November the consultant pushed them to implement this plan. She went through papers the students had written about the minischool and selected representative comments; she collected biographical information on each teacher, and then put it all together into the Jefferson Junior High Minischool Newsletter. It was duplicated and collated at the Advancement School. Team members were very excited about it; their only reservation was that it listed the team members' first names. At Jefferson, students rarely know their teachers' first names.

The other major team activity of this period was a trip taken by the entire group in December. The 23-Trolley trip is one of the activities from a PAS Social Studies unit which Helen was teaching; the trip involves taking students on a trolley ride the length of the city. In this way students are taught the different "strata" of a city and they get a sense of urban geography. Helen thought it would be an exciting trip; it would highlight the unit and it seemed the perfect first trip for the team. Mel was nervous about it from the start. It was a complicated feat to pull off with 175 students; it involved several different modes of transportation and it seemed risky.

In the face of many problems, Helen and the PAS consultant organized the trip and managed to coordinate everything so that it worked. Although they had made it work, the experience of trying to maneuver 175 students around the city with five adults discouraged them from attempting more trips for a long while. A separate problem connected with this particular trip was that the activity required the attention of the students, to help them understand the purpose of the trip. They had to look out the windows, understand what they were seeing and fill out worksheets about it. At one point during the trip, Elaine, who was not familiar with the activity, had the students in the back singing songs. Mel later said that he thought, "that was the stupidest trip I've ever been on and I told them (the team) that; that was a failure." He thought the "best part of the trip was that we were all together as a miniteam but as long as we were all together, we might as well have gone somewhere."

Attempted Resurgence

Post Holiday Problems

Meetings. The team had concluded the period before the holidays with the big trip (which, while not considered a total success, did reaffirm a belief in the team concept) and a Christmas party held on the first floor in the two adjacent classrooms and involving all the minischool students. It seemed likely that following the Christmas break the team might be able to recapture some of the enthusiasm of the fall. However an incident occurred the first week of school in January which made this much less likely.

Elaine was waiting in the hall on the first floor for a ride home when a student she did not know approached her and made advances to her. He was not caught and she went home very upset. She was absent for the next two weeks; since the boy had not actually molested her, it seemed likely the absenteeism was due to fear and an emotional upset. At the same time Mel came down with a virus and he too was out for nearly two weeks.

It was three weeks after the holidays before the team met together again; team members rarely saw each other outside of meetings because of schedule conflicts and because they did not seem to be natural friends, so that the three-week period was one of complete team inactivity. At that first meeting the consultant introduced the idea that the team might be "falling apart." Entertained briefly for a few minutes, this observation was denied by all the team members, and then the group went on to something else.

Following the three-week period, the team did begin to meet regularly but the meetings seemed lifeless and to have little substance. Most of the discussion was about individual students, and whether or not to transfer students between sections within the miniteam. No one came on time for the meetings; meetings which were supposed to begin at 1:30 did not actually start until 1:45, leaving thirty minutes a week for team discussion. Team members depended almost entirely on the consultant to have the meetings planned; only Steve brought in notes about things he felt the team should discuss. Since they did not generally see each other apart from meetings, a great deal of the thirty minutes was spent acquainting each other with opinions about various students which could have been solicited in other ways:

> Someone should write up their suggestions about transferring kids and circulate that sheet for reactions during the week and they could take a third-period during the week to check back with each other about their reactions. As it is, random kids are introduced for the first time at the meeting itself and everyone has to think for a minute, or look the kid up in the rollbook or get the kid's "pocket" (his file) so they can discuss the proposal; after that, half will agree with the change and half won't.
>
> Written Observations, Jefferson
> February, 1971

An additional difficulty the team faced was the growing realization that the principal was not a functioning member of the team as they had expected him to be in the fall; as, indeed, he had been in the summer. Although they had assumed that he would attend weekly, he was almost never present at their meetings. When he did attend, he was almost always called away after a few moments to handle a problem of some sort.

Jefferson Problems in General. One reason the principal was not as active a member of the team as expected was the unexpected change in atmosphere in the school as a whole. By February, Jefferson had an average of fourteen to fifteen absences on the faculty each day. The writer noted at the time that "when substitutes come in at that rate, discipline and control begin to slip and it creates tension and more faculty absences. In addition, the school had been having a lot of trouble with high school students coming into the school throughout the day, some of them just to horse around and be mischievous, others on more serious business connected with gangs or shaking kids down for money."

Team members felt that the problems in Jefferson were having a direct effect on their classes and thus indirectly on team functioning:

> I'll tell you one thing that bothers me is the effect of the whole school, Jefferson Junior High. I think it's getting worse...but the whole school situation here has deteriorated even since the short time I've been here, and I think that...if the whole school atmosphere had been as good, then it might have helped in the individual classes and more specifically, in our team. You know kids on our team see all these kids running through the halls and going crazy and I think it has an effect.
>
> Mel, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

Elaine held the loose atmosphere in the school to blame for the incident which had occurred in January:

> I think that everybody is very, very discouraged with the school. I don't mind my kids that are in my classes, but these outside kids in the hallways, they're just terrible. They're like a bunch of wild people being let loose. The hallways are terrible; I don't even like to stand out and take hall duty.

> I had an unfortunate incident happen to me which happened to a few other people in the school too, and, I don't know, the control of the overall school this year has slackened down a lot. In the assemblies these kids are terrible; no respect, not even when the principal or vice-principal is up there. They just seem to have no respect.
>
> Taped Interview
> March, 1971

Problems which were besetting Jefferson were probably very similar to problems which were evident in many other schools within the Philadelphia School District. Jefferson, however, had a first-year principal and that fact provided an almost ready-made "explanation" to faculty for the difficulties. To counteract this "natural" explanation, the principal spent what he later termed "much too much time" on discipline. The amount of time he had to spend in an area which was of immediate and urgent concern to the school reduced the time he could spend with the minischool team.

Parental Interaction. The Jefferson team had not listed working with parents as one of their primary goals; however, they had said in the summer that they wanted to keep the parents informed of the minischool through parent meetings in the evening, invitations to parents to visit, and special letters home. By February few of these plans had materialized. At the regular Jefferson parents' meeting in the fall, the minischool had met with its parents and extended an invitation for parents to visit classes. The invitation was not specific nor was it followed up, so only one parent actually visited. Aside from the normal phone calls teachers made to parents about students who were misbehaving, there was little interaction with parents.

In February students suggested to Elaine that she read aloud to them the book Manchild in the Promised Land (much of the English class time was taken up with Elaine's reading aloud to the students.) After consultation with the principal she sent a letter home to parents to get permission to read the book. At a February 5th meeting, with no prior warning, the principal appeared with three members of the Jefferson Home and School Association, one of whom was a parent of a minischool student. After some discussion of the language in the book, it was decided that Elaine would not use the book in class.

Although Elaine had seemed fairly comfortable in the meeting and had responded well to the parents' reactions, she later termed the event "a real let-down for me." She said she explained what had happened to the children and that they were all "disappointed." This visit may have affected the team's reaction (in May) to the consultant's suggestion that they do more to get parents involved in the program--individuals could not think of ways they could use parents.

Decision to Regroup

In spite of problems with meetings and with the school as a whole and the unexpected dilemma with the parents, the team spent the month of February planning to reorganize two of the team sections. This planning was a direct outgrowth of their discussions about moving individual students between sections. All year they had been willing to move some students to other sections, albeit though with some caution.[29] Most teachers on the team were having some problems teaching the two slowest sections of the five in the team, and one of these was a truly difficult class because of the number of behavioral problems.

Mel suggested in January that the team attempt to combine these two sections and the other team members agreed; they would make one "bad group" and one "good group." The feeling was that good students were being sacrificed because of the conduct of some in each section. Their plan was to make a large section out of all the good students in both sections and to put all the problem students in one small section. To make it fair to the team teachers they decided they would rotate the role of advisor to the problem class.

The team worked for several weeks getting ready for the change; individually and using extra meeting time, they composed the two lists of students. They met with the principal who agreed to what they intended to do; they met with the vice-principal who initially stated opposition to the plan (they should wait until the new school year to make suggestions for new groups, she said) but then capitulated and even volunteered to handle all disciplinary problems on the team if they needed her. (The principal and vice-principal had to agree before the team could begin the planning; both stated that final approval depended on the agreement of the minor subject teachers.)

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[29] Although students are placed in homogeneous groups on the basis of group tests noted for being only a general indication of a student's ability, there is a great reluctance on the part of individual teachers to change a child's section, to put him in a group "not on his level."

Everything was ready for the change by Thursday, February 18, including the plans for how to tell the students of the change the following Monday.

The team had made their plans neglecting to check with the reading teachers about the proposed changes (reading at Jefferson is taught in small groups of students from mixed sections); when they told them on Friday, the reading teachers said it would be impossible for them to make such a change. Rosters at large junior high schools are very complicated; the way the Jefferson team was scheduled (without any large blocks of team time) meant that any change they proposed had a ripple effect on many other areas of the school.

With discipline such a concern of the school, the principal was not likely to alienate a group of faculty by supporting a reorganization of the roster in the middle of the year. The team had to win support themselves and when they did not get it, all plans were off. There was to be no reorganization.

The team protested half-heartedly, but was reconciled (by the following Thursday, their regular meeting time) to leaving things as they were. The work they had done and their inability to carry out the plans were not mentioned in the meeting until the end when a visitor asked directly what had happened. This had been one of the few times the team had made any demands on Jefferson, and when it was denied, their acceptance of the denial was almost immediate. What the denial seemed to do, though, was to take away the last of their confidence in a team approach. Individual teachers who talked about students they had in common, yes; a group of teachers with some power to do things in a unified manner, no.

Re-emerging Problems

Crises in the Classes

In November Mel had said that he was "willing to try" a new method of discipline in his classes, and he had tried. Through most of December and January there were few complaints from students about his method of discipline. As discipline problems at Jefferson increased, Mel seemed to become preoccupied with student behavior in his classes. Much of team meeting time, even when the group was working on the proposed roster change (and certainly after it was denied), was taken up with complaints about specific student's behavior, especially from Mel and Elaine.

At the end of February an incident occurred from which the team never fully recovered: Mel slapped a girl several times across her face. The exact details of the incident were never clarified, but the incident was sufficiently serious to have the girl's father in the principal's office demanding Mel's resignation. There followed a two-week period of turmoil on the team, although again the incident was not discussed in a team meeting. Individual team members felt torn between loyalty to a fellow teacher (and team member) and an appeal being made by the father that they deal with an injustice to his child. Helen was particularly upset.

The incident finally "blew over;" the father dropped his efforts after a week and Mel was absent for a week (his virus reactivated). The team never dealt with the incident as a group and this time no effort was made to discuss it with Mel, privately either. But the whole affair had a devastating effect on the team.

For the next six weeks not one meeting was held with all team members present; the consultant was out several times, Mel twice and Steve once. Whatever their private feelings, team members' public behavior was one of apparent support for Mel's conduct. At the team meeting held the week after his absence, Mel asked for help in dealing with some girls because, as he said, "I can't slap them down." One team member quickly said, "Tell me who they are and I'll slap them down."

In spite of their summer planning at the Advancement School and the stress placed on humane treatment of students, when the crisis developed the Jefferson team teachers reacted in a manner consonant with the "unwritten code" of junior high school teachers: support of a fellow teacher.

It should be emphasized that these were not unusual teachers, teachers who were overly strict or rigid or conservative in teaching attitude. They had demonstrated their greater flexibility in a sense by volunteering for a new "experimental" program. The reaction of these teachers then lends more credence to the idea that the "unwritten code" of the junior high school teacher is protection of other teachers. Open discussion of particular teaching styles or methods of discipline is not encouraged. Rather a more subtle, much less direct approach is used when a teacher's behavior is considered inappropriate. This method was discussed by the principal when he was asked how the team should have handled the problem with Mel:

> What I'm saying is that a sensitive person reads what is being said, then interprets it, and then hopefully will react in a positive way. Now, if in the course of a conversation with another teacher they listen and don't hear, then chances are they won't make the necessary improvements. But if they're very sensitive and hear what's being said, they will make them.
>
> Taped Interview
> June, 1971

The same support from the team was available to Elaine who was having further difficulties with her classes. Her problems with students were not as overt as Mel's; she had become discouraged with the "permissive" approach manifested at the Advancement School because she felt it encouraged the students to be "fresh." There were several confrontations between her and students, one in which she walked out of the room and another in which she called the students names ("morons" and "dumbheads"). The team reacted to her problems in the same way it had reacted to Mel's; the implications of the incidents were never discussed and the other members offered support of her behavior. At one meeting (April 1) Mel asked her whether it was true, as students had reported to him, that she called them names; she said it was true--and that was the end of the discussion. At a meeting toward the end of March, she alluded to a shouting match she had gotten into with one student in which each had called the other names. "If a child ever jumped up in my face, I wouldn't teach until that child left the class," was the reaction of one team member to the incident.

The team was reluctant to take on these problems in meetings. As one remarked privately, "I don't know that it's our place to tell a grown person how to behave." Members did think about the problems outside of meetings. In March Helen was beginning to be very discouraged with her progress with the slowest section they taught (7-12). She felt their lack of progress in reading was hampering all her efforts to teach them history. She felt that they were not getting enough reading in English class. (In spite of the goal about reading gains chosen by the team in the summer, Elaine still read out loud most of the books used in her classes, spent most class periods doing role-playing or acting out skits, and did not assign a book report until May.)

Helen instituted a reading program in her own classes to help 7-12 learn to read, or at least enable them to read more of the work in history. Her decision to do this was another matter the team did not discuss in a meeting, and yet her decision was strongly affected by Elaine's classes. As she said later in referring to the amount of role-playing and skits in English class, "There were a lot of things I felt kids could be getting other than playing games."

These classroom crises were matters of deep concern to individuals; meetings however, skimming only the surface, began to seem more and more pointless. The writer made the following observation in April:

> Most of the meetings so far (for the last two months) have concerned complaints about kids--almost entirely. There is very little productive planning, no sharing back and forth about what's being done in the classes or what's being taught, or ways in which they could help each other or whatever, in terms of material for curricula. All meetings are spent talking about specific kids.

> It was the worst today because it was just one complaint about a kid followed by another, with a lot of comments in between, and you got the distinct feeling that you were in one camp with one side of the battle, and you'd like to go visit the other camp where the kids were to see what they were saying about the teachers.

Taped Observations, Jefferson
April, 1971

Once this type of interaction pattern is established in a team it seems very difficult to break, individual members begin to feel that there is no other way of working together. With the Jefferson team the junior high school interaction pattern of talking only indirectly about fellow teacher behavior and never confronting another teacher directly seemed to have affected the consultant as well:

> How close does a group have to feel to each other? I don't think this group having not been close has affected their not doing some large group activities. I don't know that their being any closer to each other would have made them want to or be able to do more things with the kids in large group activities.

Consultant, Taped Interview
June, 1971

Minischool Activities

The few times the students in the minischool got together as a large group were on several Wednesday afternoons in the auditorium. Wednesday afternoon was a time when all teachers were teaching, they could get 7-5 (the extra section) released from its class and the auditorium was free (the rooftop couldn't be used during the winter). Meeting in the auditorium placed great restrictions on what the teachers could plan to do; since the activity almost had to be a presentation on the stage or a film, the students were generally spectators. The other difficulty with meeting in the auditorium was that other teachers would schedule their classes to meet in there when there was some sort of emergency. Often the minischool presentations were attended by many more students than were on the team, not all of whom were very well-behaved.

In March, Helen planned a major large-group activity for the students. She had ordered movie-length films which were available for only a short period and the plan was to take two full mornings to show the movies to the entire minischool. After the films, students would return to their classes and each teacher would go over the films using worksheet questions provided by Helen. This could have been an impressive effort toward interdisciplinary cooperation except that by the time it occurred, the team seemed unable to take advantage of it. (Steve later said that the value of the activity was the "economy" it offered Helen; she did not have to spend so much time in her classes showing the films.)

Team members were very discouraged with student behavior in the auditorium, although Helen pointed out that "even adults would have done the same thing; the kids in front could not even hear." The acoustics were very bad and it took a while to get a speaker situated so that students actually heard the film. In spite of this explanation, most team members found student behavior "frustrating." Following one film there was a brief debate between team members about student behavior in the auditorium: Mel suggested that they ought to stop going to the auditorium for a month or so; Helen protested that some of the noise was honest discussion of the film by students; Elaine said, "Not the ones I heard."

The team did not actually decide not to have any more assembly programs; Mel volunteered to provide a skit for the next one. He chose the students and they rehearsed at odd hours...but the skit was never presented. There were no more assembly programs for the rest of the year.

There were no trips for a long period, either. Team members talked about taking trips almost as though they were obligated to plan for them, but they seemed unable to complete and implement any plans:

> The last couple of meetings I've been to, each one has said, "well, you know, what about trips?" Everybody puts forth the same ideas each time. Helen will say that she's interested in going to a play; Elaine will say that she's interested in taking the kids to New York; Mel will say that he's interested in taking the kids on a picnic and Steve will talk about his 'three trips.' (a scheme to do three trips in one)
>
> And that's as far as they get. They never make a specific plan, they never choose one of these things to do. As far as I know they don't ever make any arrangements to get to the point where they could choose what they're going to do.
>
> Taped Observations, Jefferson
> April, 1971

In June Mel explained their lack of enthusiasm this way:

> Well, look, it just seems that we didn't get around to planning these things; we're too busy all doing a lot of other things, you know. We're all in our own classrooms and all. That whenever we have meetings we didn't talk about too many group things. We talked more about what we're going to do with this kid or what we're going to do with that kid, or how we can get 7-8 (the problem section) together, how we could get them to do a little better, you know, things like that.
>
> Writer: Why didn't you talk about other things?

Mel: Well, you mean like trips and activities?

Writer: Well, I don't know. What other things do you think you could have talked about?

Mel: More trips and different activities--things like that. It just didn't come up. It would come up but nobody seemed to be all excited to do it, that's all. That's just what it amounted to.

Taped Interview
June, 1971

They did plan one more trip. Steve's scheme (discussed in the next section) was reduced to two trips-in-one instead of three, and was actually arranged and carried out in June. The rest of the year was spent by the group planning for next year.

The Final Months

Overall Program

> All the kids are here for, to me, is to learn about what's going on, to develop their minds and to kind of make them better persons; that's the way I look at it, to make them better persons. And whatever it takes to do it, and however it works out, if that's being accomplished, that's what I really care about, and I think that's all we should really care about.
>
> And the fact that we're not integrating the materials just right, to me is not too important. I think if you get the kids to realize the importance of school,' you get the kids motivated so that they learn something, I think you've accomplished something.
>
> Maybe I'm setting my standards too low.
>
> Mel, Taped Interview
> June, 1971

Throughout the year the team members had concentrated more on their individual classrooms than they did on teamwork and certainly more than they did on any interdisciplinary work. Beginning, as they had, with emphasis placed on teaching skills in individual subject areas, they never moved from that to the cross-subject matter developmental work they had envisioned. (Their summer plans actually did not provide for this kind of overlap; the original schedule showed each teacher moving from emphasis on skills to developmental work within his own area. They had stopped short of going on to the next level in which there would have been joint planning.)

Helen had followed the schedule much as she had planned. She had wanted to use several of the PAS units in Human Development, and she did. At the end of the year she stated some ambivalent feelings about her classes. She said she felt she had learned a lot from teaching the new curriculum and that the consultant "had been a doll" in getting needed material from the Advancement School so she could teach the units.

However she also said that though she felt close to the students this year, she felt the closeness might have been too much. Her "ships were not as tight" as they had usually been; at the end of the year she was having more disciplinary problems than usual and she attributed this to the team. In conversation with the writer she said that in past years she had taken some of her classes (her advisory section always) on special trips but that this year she was unable to do that because she felt she would have to take the whole team.[30]

Steve's classes in science went as he had planned. By the end of the year, students were engaged in many different projects (he had them write a twenty-page report on one project) and he praised the "cyclic" effect of being on a team: his classes had started off well and he had felt encouraged, spurred on to find interesting experiments; the students then got excited by what he brought in and that encouraged him even more. He continued to be the students' favorite teacher and he continued to be the strongest believer in the team. (When students later were asked about the minischool,

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[30] Teachers at junior high schools seem to form a special attachment to their advisory section. It is usually students from their advisory who come back the following year to visit them, and teachers provide special year-end activities for their advisory section. Being on a team seemed to have the effect of diminishing the importance of the advisor-advisory relationship without, however, providing a substitute for that relationship at Jefferson.

they frequently cited things that Steve had told them about the team: that they "learn more in the miniteam," that they were getting more "advanced work" in the miniteam than the rest of the school.) Some of the success Steve was having as a second year teacher he seemed to attribute to being on the team although he himself said the differential effects "were impossible to sort out."

Elaine's classes ended the year pretty much the way they had been all year, although confrontations with students slackened off considerably. (By the end of the year she had become so suspicious of the students that when her advisory gave her a surprise birthday party, she wondered if they had not done it to get a "free period.") The consultant in April worked with Elaine for a while to try to implement one of the PAS units in reading and writing. It began well but was never followed through. At the end of the year Elaine, commenting on her relationship with the students, said that she "felt this year I've really given a lot of myself" but that "with a small minority of the kids I would say I just felt very unappreciated."

Mel had tried several of the math units from the Advancement School. (He had been the most excited of the team members about the summer subject-matter workshop.) He had tried the PAS Fractions Unit (the consultant spent weeks putting the material together so that he could teach it). He liked the unit a lot though he complained that using it, he had "to be ten different places at once." He went on to the PAS unit on "sets" which he found not quite so successful.

Helen had found that being on a team "made you more conscientious," so that as a teacher you "don't take things for granted after a few months." Perhaps a sense of being kept "on your toes" made the classes, though not related, more interesting throughout the year. The consultant felt in June that team members "could have done more in their classrooms... varying activities within a given lesson," but Helen felt the team had "reached its potential in subject area." At the second report period, the minischool students again comprised 70% of the honor roll students. In evaluating the minischool over the year, the principal said in June that he would have to give the instructional program "a positive rating" and that he felt the teachers had done a "tremendous job."

Final Team Activities

The second trip for the Jefferson team was the result of Steve's plan to do two trips at once. Taking half the students at a time, the minischool toured the airport and Tinicum Marsh. Half the students went on Friday and the other half on the following Monday. Two teachers went on the trip while two stayed behind with the rest of the students. According to the consultant, it went very smoothly.

Then on a Wednesday, the day before the last day of the year, all four teachers took the students on a picnic for half a day. They picnicked and played games as a final get-together. (A park is within easy walking distance from Jefferson.) Most of the planning for the trip was done by Steve and the PAS consultant.

Team meeting time was devoted throughout May to making plans for the next year. The team made several requests of the administration:

The first was that the seventh-grade minischool students be allowed to remain together in the eighth grade and that a new team of eighth grade teachers be constituted to teach them. This was done and the Advancement School assured Jefferson that salaries would be paid for both teams for a summer workshop program.

The second request was that the team be given rooms together on one floor. They were allotted rooms on the same floor but not together. Except for the fact that students would not have to climb stairs next year, the physical situation would be almost identical.

They requested that one counselor be assigned all the minischool students.[31] After several hours of conference with the counselors, several of whom felt that this was not a good idea, it was agreed that one counselor would handle all the minischool students (in addition to other students) and would attend the summer program with the team.

The most important request made by the team was for the minischool teachers to have responsibility for teaching only four sections, but for five periods a day.[32] This request would have relieved the group of the necessity of planning activities for 175 students, giving them only 140. The request was turned down.

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[31] As in most junior high schools, Jefferson students are assigned to counselors arbitrarily; one counselor is assigned students whose last names begin with the letters A-F, a second counselor has G-M, etc.

Requests for a team area for the teachers (teachers had met all year in the principal's office and had no place for informal contacts), for reading teachers assigned to the team, and for team teachers to take over teaching music and hygiene to minischool students, were still pending when school closed.

The schedule as blocked out at the end of the year did not look much different from the schedule they had had at the beginning of the year. They were to be separated physically (cutting off the possibility for any schedule arrangements independent of the rest of the school) and they were all rostered to teach five classes again. This time the team decided it would not include the fifth section in the minischool. The fact that everyone would be teaching a section apart from the minischool, though, represented a drain on energies which no one could estimate in June.

The similarities between the two schedules---despite the problems the team had had in working with that schedule during the year---could be a result of the principal's year-end point of view toward the team. The year seemed to have diminished in his mind the summer emphasis on team work and large group activities, and his definition of a miniteam was that "it is an in-house curriculum, experimental, developmental group." This definition did not necessitate the kinds of roster changes and room arrangements the team requested in June.

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[32] This request was based on the way other Advancement School minischools operated: teachers taught the full complement of classes but to only four sections. Team teachers taught some minor subjects to make up the difference.

Final Reflections

Almost all team members at the end of the year expressed some disappointment with the team's progress. One of the disappointments expressed by two team members was that the team was not as close as they had thought it was going to be:

> I thought I'd feel more that I was in the team when we met over the summer because we were constantly together and I thought it would be like that. But it hasn't been that much like that for me. I have an identity to my team, I feel very happy and proud that I'm in the team, and I'd defend it if anybody... not only defend it but I promulgate it when I talk to anybody who's not in the team. But as far as feeling constantly that, "here I am, I'm just a member of the team," I feel still more as an individual teacher than a member of a team.
>
> I feel that while I am a member of the miniteam, I'm Mr.__________, teacher first.
>
> Mel, Taped Interview
> June, 1971

Elaine ended the year with similar opinions, although her feelings were somewhat mixed; she thought the team would be a bigger thing in Jefferson than it was:

> I didn't really feel that much different being on a team. I thought I would. I thought a lot more would be made of the miniteam this year, but it wasn't. The only thing that I believe was made mention of was in the beginning when (the principal) was talking about new programs at Jefferson and he said "miniteam."
>
> But there were so many things I just thought we were supposed to do but I guess they couldn't get through.
>
> Taped Interview
> June, 1971

The consultant felt that one of the team's problems was that they became overconfident from their early successes in the Fall:

> We kind of psyched ourselves--I don't know, something we did after that first Saturday meeting that we had at PAS, you know, when all the schools came together. Our school was the only one that wasn't having a whole lot of problems like the other teams, and I think we kind of got a little self-satisfied at that point.
>
> And I don't know, I've been feeling that all year. I don't think we can say that now. I don't think we can feel as satisfied now as we did after that first meeting, because I think that a lot of teams have probably done some things a lot better than we have--a lot more things.
>
> Taped Interview
> June, 1971

For Steve, the feelings he got from that first Saturday meeting persisted throughout the year, and he said in June that he felt the team had done "phenomenally well":

> As an absolute from what all of us have gotten when we talk to other groups at PAS, it seems to us that we've done better and it seems to them that we've done better in most of the criteria that we've evaluated at the meetings.
>
> As far as actual activities go, I consider that we did more than the rest of the schools did, that our kids got a lot more done.
>
> Taped Interview
> June, 1971

Elaine, however, saw those Saturday meetings in much the way the consultant had; they helped to create some of her disappointment in the team:

> Sometimes, I don't know, I just get discouraged; when I go to PAS and when I sit in and talk to other people from other schools and you know, like you hear all these things they're doing and then again the grass is always greener on the other side. I guess they have their problems too and their ups and downs.
>
> Taped Interview
> June, 1971

In assessing the team, the Jefferson principal said in June that neither he nor the vice-principals would like to see the team discontinued, but that they did feel "there might be a little tighter control over some of the sections and students." It seemed as though the team was caught in the middle: some of their classes had gone part of the way toward being warmer, more humane and with a different student-teacher relationship. Part of the way, but not far enough for the teachers to see the benefits of this change. Several teachers said in June that they planned to start off the next year being much tougher on students. For example, Helen tried to explain her feelings of disappointment with the team by saying that the teachers had gotten too close to the students:

> We were all out for this closeness thing with the teachers and I think that some of the kids became very personal towards us. Like they take us as buddies which is something I have never allowed myself to fall into. It's good if you have the type of kid that can accept something like that in a mature way. And some of our kids, I just don't think are that mature.
>
> Another thing, like some of us have a tendency, in front of the kids, to call each other by our first names. I don't mind that but the kids get excited about that because they're not used to it. And I may slip and call Mr.__________, Steve; he may slip and call me Helen in the classroom or something, and the kids really get excited about it. They know our first names--I don't know if that has anything to do with it but it's something that never happened before with me, and I think it might have been one of the little things that caused this laxness in discipline.
>
> Taped Interview
> June, 1971

In spite of their disappointments the general reaction of team members was that compared to the rest of the school they had had a good year:

Walk around this school and look at this place. It's really bad; it's sad some of the rooms you go into and see what's going on and see the teacher standing there and getting bombarded and then the kids aren't learning a thing.

In my room they're sitting there, they're doing their work, they might complain that I give them too much or that it's a drag sometimes, but they're doing their work, they pass their tests, a lot of them are getting good marks. And that's all--what am I going to do? The fact that I didn't teach them a little history that day or spelling, I'm not going to get aggravated by it because I see what else is going on.

And maybe that's a lousy attitude, but to me, it pleases me.

Mel, Taped Interview
June, 1971

PART TWO

DISCUSSION OF SPECIFIC TOPICS

CHAPTER FOUR

THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

Content

The instructional programs of the North and Jefferson teams were quite different. Much about the programs and their development has been covered in Part I as each team's chronological development was outlined. However there are important general points to be found in a closer study of the instructional programs alone.

1) One of the most obvious points to be made is that the flexibility and inventiveness of the program depends, in large part, on how flexible the physical arrangement seems to the team members.

The Jefferson teachers understandably viewed their setting as an inflexible one. From the beginning, they preferred to remain within the ordinary junior high school structure, risking little for the sake of the team. Early in the fall, the principal of Jefferson remarked that while he could see some value in having all their classrooms together in the same area of the building, "...if they're going to have a science lab and all the rest of the rooms that they want, it's almost impossible to work it because the science labs are all in one part of the building." For the team, it was more important that science be taught in a proper room than it was that the team have the creative possibilities provided by adjoining rooms.

The North team, located in a synagogue which had never been used for public school purposes before, had no "proper rooms." Science was going to be taught wherever they found a place to teach it, as was everything else. The teachers' first reactions to this amount of flexibility in the physical setting was not one of creativity and imagination; it took several months of trying a rather rigid approach before they moved to more innovative scheduling.

The initial schedule North followed was devised in the summer; there was no programmatic basis for its outline. Rather, it was an attempt to fit all the students into all the rooms with a given number of teachers. From the beginning it was disastrous. Included within the schedule were two very different types of teaching situations: small group and large group instruction. But since neither had been chosen for a programmatic reason, little good use was made of either. Teachers often tried to teach the same lessons in the large room (with 60 students) that they did in the small rooms (with 20 students). In addition, they used the same method of presentation in both situations: lecture.

Expectations for students' behavior at North were not consonant with the physical setting or the program. Teachers had expected the student behavior to be constant while they (the teachers) changed their own behavior. They looked a lot less formal than most teachers; the men did not wear ties and they wore their hair longer than is usual. Students were allowed initially to call teachers by their first names. But the teachers were unprepared for the reaction this evoked from students. There was an underlying expectation from teachers about student behavior which was at odds with the physical setting and the picture the teachers wanted to present. For example, teachers expected students to bring pencils and paper to class, to conform to junior high school behavioral norms. Yet there was nothing in the annex setting to support and reinforce these norms.

From the beginning the teachers knew the program at North was inappropriate, but it took many hours of planning and arguing before a new plan could be put into effect. The new plan was a step toward utilization of space with a programmatic rationale. The big room was utilized for what it could do best: individualized instruction. Students still alternated days in the big room all morning with days in the small rooms, but it was possible to keep both activities separate in their minds. They were not expected to coordinate their dissimilar experiences in each setting. Teachers had separate duties and each could concentrate, then, on producing materials appropriate for his or her setting.

Their last major schedule change was implemented in June for the final two weeks; teachers had begun to have such flexible outlooks that the planning for the new schedule took only a few days. In this case, they begain the planning with a specific programmatic goal in mind and then looked at the space they had as it could best be used to achieve that goal. This represented as approach directly opposite the one they had taken in the summer and the one extant in most junior high schools.

* * * * * *

2) The second major point is that the coordination of

classes---or interdisciplinary work---requires careful planning for its implementation---as well as the desire to do it.

Neither Jefferson nor North did very much in the way of relating its individual classrooms. Jefferson teachers had listed the interrelation of classes as their primary goal; in September, Steve described what he hoped would happen:

> I'm very, very much in favor of overlapping curricula; to me it really gets the stuff across to the students. There's the potential for having things like...we're talking about a day at Valley Forge where Helen will teach some things about the history of it and I'll teach tactics and so forth, and have the kids go out there and re-enact a battle, and let them observe it and see what happens and talk about it and write about in in English class. They could do some math calculations on it, ratios and tie everything into an overall activity.

The team did little more toward implementing interdisciplinary teaching than this type of speculative thinking. In the summmer they had listed the thinking skills which were to be links between their individual classrooms. Beside each of the thinking skills, they had listed some possible activities which would cut across discipline lines to illustrate each skill. However, when they made the schedule of what each was going to teach during the year, none of these activities was included and nothing was built into their plans for the year which would insure or create the need for interdisciplinary planning.

One of the difficulties was that the term "interdisciplinary planning" was interpreted very narrowly. Although the Jefferson team seemed to begin well, using skills as the connectors between classes, it soon slipped into the rut of defining interdisciplinary work as the repetition of the same words in each classroom.

Elaine illustrated this point of view in March when she was asked about the amount of interdisciplinary coordination the team had carried out:

> What I would like to do for myself is to really find out where the other teachers are on the team so I could start relating a little bit more into the English classroom what's going on in math, science or geography. Sometimes, though, if they hear one thing in one class then they get it in another class, it starts becoming boring to them and they get tired of it.

At Jefferson, team teachers were often unaware of what was being taught in other teachers' classrooms; there was no provision for exchanging information about classes. As noted in the preceding chapter, practically none of their meeting time was devoted to this topic. They worked neither individually nor as a group to implement the coordinated goals they had chosen over the summer.

* * * * * *

3) The third point to be learned from an analysis of the two instructional programs is related to the second: teachers will retreat into their own classrooms if there is nothing forcing them to work together.

At North, there was no possibility for teachers to escape the annex situation or learning to work together. Their desks were in the same room and the building was so small that teachers and students saw each other constantly during the day. Classrooms were not private possessions of the teachers who taught in them; they served different functions depending on the time of day. In the morning, the rooms were classrooms but during break and lunch, they became quiet rooms, lunch rooms, game rooms and study rooms belonging to the annex as a whole. The North teachers ended the year feeling disappointed in their individual classroom work and yet excited by the work they had done as a team.

For the Jefferson teachers, it was just the opposite: their classrooms were their private domains, both in terms of instructional program and discipline methods. The team's effect initially was to provide each teacher with leverage he would not otherwise have over the students: the threat of being taken off the team. Their classes were generally more orderly than the rest of the school's despite the problems of two of the members.

No one should denigrate the power a team has in getting teachers to try new curricula or methods in their classrooms. It provided that impetus at Jefferson. However, the goal in the long run, is for the team to move beyond that stage into one in which there is more sharing and coordination. The Jefferson goals, cognitive in nature and without adequate implementation plans, were not strong enough to pull the teachers together during the school year. Their instructional "program" was individualistic for each teacher.

* * * * * *

4) The fourth and final point concerns the importance of a team area with adjoining classrooms.

At Jefferson the boundaries between the classrooms were as firmly in place at the end of the year as they had been in the beginning. It was difficult for it to be otherwise, for the physical situation they were in discouraged any sharing between classrooms. The physical situation at North made anything other than sharing impossible. In the short dark days of December when team enthusiasm was at a low ebb anyway and the students' initial excitement seemed to be wearing thin, there was for both teams a tendency to withdraw from team concerns and concentrate on individual subject matter. At Jefferson, there was nothing to keep this from happening. Team members could go for days without seeing each other, without having to think of the team at all. Teachers in a separate area like North were not afforded this "luxury;" if they wanted to avoid the team, they had to be absent.

Without a separate team area, indentifiable physically, it was difficult to establish an overall team atmosphere. In a small area, the overall atmosphere must be worked out cooperatively, established by the students as well as the teachers. In the fall, the students at North set the team atmosphere alone because of the confusion and disillusionment of the teachers. The students were unhappy, the teachers were unhappy, and the atmosphere was one of disorder, strident voices and manifest tension. No classroom was safe from the effects of the tone of the building as a whole, illustrating how powerful a force team atmosphere can be. Later, when the atmosphere in North was changed, it became a powerful agent for good. Although no teacher felt his individual teaching had improved a great deal for the fall, the tone of the building had changed radically and classroom performance was different.

Jefferson found it difficult to establish any team atmosphere at all. Since they were not engaged in cooperative classroom planning, and it was a hit-or-miss affair whether the different classes complemented each other on a given day, the only support for the team idea was what a teacher might _say_ about it.

To summarize, the instructional program of a particular team seems to depend a great deal on the flexibility of its physical setting and how easily a program can be created within it which will have programmatic logic. (It may take a while before _team members_ are flexible enough to view the physical setting with an open-minded attitude.) If team members seriously plan to have interdisciplinary cooperation, they must make detailed plans (not just goals) for how they will bring this about during the year. Without such plans, each teacher will tend to retreat into his own classroom and the instructional program will no longer have a team reference at all. Likewise, the team must be established in its own separate area both for the possibilities this allows for programmatic experimentation and for the control it provides over the establishment of a team atmosphere going beyond separate classrooms.

Teaching Styles

Initial Observations

The first few class meetings (as in most schools) were occupied with establishing a tone for the class which the teachers hoped would govern student behavior for the rest of the year; much of what could be observed initially about teaching style was the process of establishing this tone. The tones established at

Jefferson and North during the first weeks were very different.

At Jefferson, expectations for student behavior were clear and unquestionable; the assumption appeared to be that the more orderly and calm the school year began the better the year would be for students and teachers. None of the team classes was a challenge to this assumption; the keynote in each was the sense of orderly process. Students faced no dissonance between what was expected of them in the halls and their minor classes, and what was expected in the team classes.

The procedure for Jefferson classes was described in detail in Part I. The result of these practices was that each class was very calm and ordered. There were practically no discipline problems. The following excerpt is from the writer's notes after observing one team member's class in late September; it is a good illustration of all the team classes:

> The class begins with the students copying their homework assignment from the board. Helen then passes out the books and the class procedes to what is termed "pre-class work" which in this case is to skim pages 13-15 in the geography textbook---that section dealing with latitude and longitude. (There are about five minutes for this activity.)
>
> Helen then tells the class to get out their homework from the night before. The homework was to look up the definitions for a number of geography terms, terms like axis and intersection and rotate. After a student is called on to read his definition he is asked to make a sentence using the word. There are a lot of volunteers for each definition. The students are seated alphabetically in rows and Helen has a seating chart from which she can call the students by name as she calls on them.
>
> When a student is called on and has his work, he gets a check mark from Helen as evidence that he has participated. No one was called on twice during the class and every time someone was called on, he or she received credit. As the definitions are read for both

> axis and intersection, Helen expands the definition by illustrating on the blackboard.
>
> Helen then taught a lesson on latitude and longitude. She reviewed the definitions of each with the class and she drew a globe on the board with the equator and prime meridian on it. She got a student to come up to the board to put the directions (north, south, etc.) in the proper places on the circle. She drew the latitudes on the board and marked them off by degrees saying that 0° was at the equator and 90° was at the North and South Pole.
>
> She would point to various lines on the board and ask students to identify if it was north or south latitude. She did the same with longitude until finally the class was getting them pretty easily. Then she asked them to identify points on the map as a combination of latitude and longitude. There was considerably more difficulty with this part. At the end of the class, many of the students were answering these questions incorrectly.

North Annex had practically none of the sense of established order found at Jefferson. The props which were so helpful to the Jefferson teachers in setting the tone they wanted did not exist at North: standard desks and chairs, lockers, a sense of procedure to the school as a whole, support staff whose job was to help with discipline. In addition, their classrooms were about one-third the size of Jefferson's.

These physical inconveniences were only part of a general problem, including the lack of clear expectations on the part of the teachers. The team had agreed that it wanted to establish a different type of relationship with its students from that found in a normal junior high school. They knew what they wanted that relationship to be---one of warm trust---but did not know how to bring it about. The issue was further confused by the lack of agreement among the teachers themselves on expectations.

In one class students were allowed to sit on the window sills and the teacher provided the pencils; in another the teacher expected them to bring pencils and threatened suspension if a student sat in the window sill or ate his lunch in class. Students were the best behaved in the class that most nearly matched those described at Jefferson, where the chairs were in rows, homework was collected and the lesson was taught in a logical orderly manner. North searched for months, half the year, before it developed a program which would begin to channel the students' energies into constructive areas. Discipline and expectations for student behavior were still problems, though less severe, at the end of the school year.

The following is an excerpt from notes made while observing one of the North classes in the big room early in the year. It is typical of the experiences most North teachers had in the big room unless they were showing a film. The class was a math class; Mike had given out worksheets for the students to complete. He was moving around the room, answering questions and giving out a second worksheet for those who finished the first.

> Students up---two students trading punches. Boy in yellow, standing and yelling. Underground noise very high. At one table---all boys---everyone is yelling at each other.
>
> Mike circulating, answering questions. Hard to differentiate sounds or voices---loud blur. Small fight starts at another table. People are going in and out of the door. Students singing "We shall overcome" at one table. One boy standing swinging his arm very fast. Girl walking with chair knob in her hand. Background noise continues at the same pitch---voices and sounds of slaps, pencils hitting the table, chairs moving.
>
> Mike at the center of the room, lots of kids around him. Someone throws a basketball---sound of dribbling. Yelling between tables. Student throwing

> lunch in air. Mike handing out previous papers, calling names. One-fourth of the students are standing.
>
> Noise high. Students moving from table to table. One student following Mike. Boy twirling basketball on fingertip on one side of the room. Girl going after boy with pencil held like a knife.
>
> Mike calls for attention, wants to collect lab reports. Wants to pick up reports from the table. Students (5-10) up, bring worksheets to him. Students push back chairs from tables. Three-fourths up and walking around, scrunching up paper.
>
> Most students up. Basketball being thrown, chairs being thrown. Lots of laughing, taunting, yelling. Mike at front of room. Several small fights. Bell rings. Everyone runs to door, screaming.

This type of disorder and confusion was distressing to teachers and students and continued far longer than anyone believed it would.

Mid-year Observations

In January, all the team classes in each school were systematically observed by two observers using the Flanders Observation System. (The Flanders is a systematic method for recording the verbal interaction in a classroom; notations are made very three seconds for twenty minutes.) Each teacher was observed four times; the observations from each class were averaged and are presented in Table III.

From these observations, it is difficult to generalize a great deal about the influence of the teams; most of the teaching

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[33] Jefferson experienced this same sense of frustration and lack of control early in the Fall when they were in a situation with the normal support system removed. They took all the students up on the roof for a large group activity and attempted to use the same techniques for establishing order and getting control that they used in their classrooms.

		CATEGORIES*	NORTH TEACHERS				JEFFERSON TEACHERS**		
			Sue	Edith	Mike	Hal	Steve	Elaine	Helen
TEACHER TALK	INDIRECT INFLUENCE	1. Accepts Feeling	0.5%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	00	00	00
		2. Praises or Encourages	2.7%	5.2%	6.1%	0.6%	0.2%	1.4%	0.6%
		3. Accepts or Uses Ideas of Students	3.7%	4.7%	7.7%	2.8%	0.9%	3.1%	2.7%
		4. Asks Questions	6.6%	8.0%	15.8%	6.0%	3.6%	10.8%	11.3%
	DIRECT INFLUENCE	5. Lecturing	26.1%	25.2%	22.8%	20.4%	20.4%	39.3%	32.5%
		6. Giving Directions	3.4%	4.0%	5.3%	2.0%	0.2%	0.9%	0.7%
		7. Criticizing Justifying Authority	6.2%	4.3%	5.2%	14.4%	1.0%	9.1%	5.9%
STUDENT TALK		8. Student Talk-Response	5.0%	9.2%	12.2%	6.8%	2.0%	5.0%	5.2%
		9. Student Talk-Initiation	13.0%	9.2%	12.1%	11.2%	55.5%	14.9%	17.6%
		10. Silence or Confusion	33.5%	30.2%	12.4%	35.8%	16.1%	14.2%	22.4%

TABLE III

FLANDERS' CLASSROOM ANALYSIS OF JEFFERSON AND NORTH TEACHERS IN MID-YEAR OBSERVATIONS

*Taken from Edmund J. Amidon and Ned A. Flanders, The Role of the Teacher in the Classroom, Association for Productive Teaching, Minneapolis, Minn. 1967.

**Does not include any averages for Mel, the math teacher. All math classes observed were working on a fractions unit from the Advancement School where the teacher circulated and helped individual students; there was practically no verbal interaction in the classroom at all. Comments on his teaching style are included in the text.

appeared more related to individual style than to a team method or approach. This is logical given the fact that little was done in the way of interdisciplinary coordination by either team. There are points raised by this systematic observation which should be noted:

1) At both schools the observers noted that the walls of the classrooms were drab and uninviting. In North, this was made worse by the lack of lockers and bookshelves so that books and belongings were scattered about every surface. In a couple of classrooms at North, there were a few pictures taped to the wall but, in general, there was little sense of student input into the decoration of the building. At Jefferson, the same bulletin boards the teachers had welcomed the students with in the fall were still in evidence in March, though in considerably worse shape. In neither school was there a sense of the students having influenced their environment other than negatively. Graffiti was much apparent in the Jefferson rooms, some of it from last year's classes; there was no graffiti at North.

2) In all classrooms, except Steve's at Jefferson, student participation was low, lower than one would expect. One reason for the low figure on student input was the reliance on "seat work" found in both schools in practically all classes. Seat work included copying from the board, doing worksheets, or reading and answering questions from the text; there was little provision for those students who finished their work early. Classes essentially were run in a step-by-step fashion with all students expected to be on the same step at the same time.

3) Another explanation for the low student input was the great amount of time spent in silence and/or confusion in all classes, especially at North. The precentage of time spent in silence and confusion at these two schools was excessive; some of the silence came at the end of lengthy questions from the teachers; much of it was silence following criticism by the teacher. Another pattern found in several classes was a period of noise and confusion followed by criticism (discipline) by the teacher, followed by silence. In some classes what started off as silence while the students attended to a silent demonstration by the teacher (waiting for an experiment, writing on the overhead projector) degenerated into confusion when it went on too long. Some student input could not be recorded as such because there was such a jumble of voices calling out that no one speaker could be distinguished. (This may indicate excited participation but if no one ever gets the floor, it is participation without purpose or direction.)

4) North teachers engaged in less direct teaching on the average than the Jefferson teachers; Jefferson teachers rarely used praise and never made personal statements in the classroom. The primary observer (not the writer) made these remarks after observing the North classes:

> The four teachers (Hal, Edith, Mike and Sue) I have observed all seem to have one thing in common, treating students like humans. They have apologized, thanked, excused(themselves), excused students, touched students, talked one-to-one,encouraged, joked and praised students at one time or another. Though the praise and encouragement is very limited, it is still more than I have seen in other public school teachers I have observed.
>
> Observer Notes,
> January, 1971

One reason Jefferson teachers received few tallies in the praise area is that they were still relying on the role-book-credit system for rewarding participation. When a student answered a question or attempted a problem he received a check in the book instead of a word of praise. North teachers did not even take role during class; most used verbal praise as a reward.

5) The team exerted little influence over the personal style of its members at both schools. Steve's class at Jefferson was like no other observed on either team. His intention from the beginning of the year was to turn the control of the class more and more over to the students; by January he had nearly achieved his goal. He seemed hardly to participate at all, sitting on the side of the classroom as projects were being presented by students to the class and the ensuing discussion was directed primarily by students themselves. His classes were the most successful observed, yet they had little impact on the rest of the team. No other team member observed his classes, nor was his method discussed at any meeting.

Mel, also at Jefferson, put students on their own, with workbooks to do while he circulated to answer questions. It is obvious his perspective toward it was different from Steve's:

> I mean it looks glamorous that you're going to put kids on their own and it's going to be individual, and then a lot of teachers will interpret that as, well now you can read the newspaper since they all have things to do. But it's so far from the truth, like this Seeing Through Fractions, all the kids had their own stuff to do but they're driving me crazy because kids can't read, kids can't do this, you've got to be ten different places at once instead of being up at the board just going on with your "shpiel." You've got to be here and there and the other place and it's more difficult. It's more taxing on me.
>
> Taped Interview
> March, 1971

6) A word must be said about the amount of discipline and criticism in the team classes, particularly Hal's at North and Elaine's at Jefferson. The amount of discipline required seemed directly related to the confidence the teachers had in the lessons they had planned. Steve had little need of discipline because his classes were so well-organized and because he had been gradually relinquishing control to the students all year. Both Hal and Elaine had good ideas for classes but little sense of how to implement them. Each relied heavily on sarcasm, especially when the lesson began to go badly. Theirs became a battle of wills with the students, cyclical and self-feeding, hard to break out of once it began.

Final Observations

Classes were not observed systematically again with the Flanders but the writer did visit the team classes in each school several times before the end of the year.

Jefferson classes did not change a great deal though they continued in directions evident in January. By the end of March Steve could leave his class alone for a few minutes with no appreciable rise in misbehavior or noise; student discussion and individual projects continued to dominate his class time. Helen was having more difficulty getting her class settled with the "pre-class" technique; more time was necessary disciplining rowdy students at the beginning of the class. She was using the method of putting students in groups less and relying more on their attending to her at the blackboard; discipline generally was harder to maintain. Mel tried another of the PAS math units similar to the one on fractions, with much less success; students were not as eager to work for the entire period in workbooks, especially not every day for weeks. His discipline problems (reported in Chapter Three) had become severe with two of his classes and interfered with his ability to teach them. Elaine's classes continued to be battles between her and the students; her criticism of the students increased as did their withdrawl and non-participation in her classes. She was offering little for students to be involved in and responded sarcastically to those who made the effort at all.

Jefferson teachers had the structure at the beginning of the year so well-established that they could have taught their students practically anything their students had the skills to learn. But the structure often was not followed up with engaging and substantive materials. Teachers came to rely on the structure as an end in itself, as a separate goal, forgetting that it actually served only as an intermediary to teach students something. Thus, a teacher like Elaine could allow her students in October to sit quietly for thirty minutes or more, providing them with little to do, depending on the system to keep them in line. By March or April, however, the system had lost its effectiveness in keeping students contained; without a substantive program, there was progressive disorder.

Steve at Jefferson offered a substantive program in his classes, the only teacher on either team to do so. The North annex provided its students with substance outside the regular classes, in the daily interaction with teachers, in the opportunities available after school, in the big-room skills period, and in the new schedule designed to finish out the year. The individual classrooms at North actually changed very little over the year. Neither team accomplished the balance between structure and substance necessary for having good classes.

CHAPTER FIVE

TEAM FUNCTIONING

The way each minischool team functioned was critical to the depth and type of program each developed; the details of the teams' styles of interaction have been covered fairly extensively in Part I. This chapter intends to focus on two aspects of team functioning as most important for others in similar situations: the meaning of the team for its members, and the use of meeting time.

The Meaning of the Team

Individual Versus the Group

North and Jefferson had clearly different answers to the question of which was most important, team or individual concerns. It is a decision which concerns any group working together.

> I think this is going to be one of the most difficult hurdles for any miniteam. Everyone is an individual and individuals have to somehow submerge their individuality to the team will. This, I think, is a very, very difficult thing to do. As I am finding now, I'm finding that perhaps that which is not acceptable to me, may be acceptable to others in the team, and that my tolerance level is apparently not perhaps the same as someone else's tolerance level. Somehow I am going to have to change me sufficiently---right? to fit into the pattern that the team wishes to establish---and that is not an easy thing.
>
> North Consultant
> Taped Interview
> October, 1970

The experience of being closely associated with a group of people was mentioned by all the North team members as one of the most important differences between being in the regular junior high school and being at the annex.

> Last year I was really my own person---I did exactly what I wanted to do. Whereas this year I didn't feel as though I could do that and I was very much team-oriented, and therefore, wanted to ask the other people, you know, what do you think I should be doing; how do you think I should be going. I think that I spent more of my time---I guess, not as an administrator---but working with the team than I did working with my teaching.
>
> Edith, Taped Interview
> May, 1971

The superior status given the team at North was not duplicated at Jefferson; there, individual member's concerns were primary and the team was secondary. The team idea tended to be downplayed by both the Jefferson consultant and the team members. In the fall Steve commented on their functioning as a team:

> As far as working as a team, the four of us...don't really function as a team. We're pretty much on the same wave length but we're still all functioning as four people; it's definitely not team behavior. There's no common daily drive. There's no overall common drive, but something more specific maybe, I haven't been able to finger it yet. The way the group functions doesn't seem like a team yet. It's good. It's not a hostile group and we're all cooperative and that's about half the battle right there. It's just some cohesiveness that isn't there.
>
> Taped Interview
> October, 1970

The cohesiveness could have been brought about if the team members had come to value the team as a structure as more important than the members' personal concerns. They never did, and by the middle of the year seemed to have stopped caring about achieving that orientation. As the consultant said in March, "I think as far as reacting and interacting with each other, they're just a group of people that acn work together fairly well."

At the end of the year, Helen said that she could not think of anything really good that came out of their working together as a group. As she pointed out, everyone was basically responsible for his own subject matter and they did not exchange much, except briefly, at meetings.

Interdependence and Commitment

The strength of the group commitment at North created an interdependence among the members of the team not often found in junior high schools (or many working situations). The North team was in a situation where the team members had to be able to rely on each other or their program would not survive. Sue described in March, the interdependence and feelings of responsibility shared by all the North team members:

> I would like to have a day or so off; I have not been able to take a day off. And it's funny because sometimes now in the morning when I just don't feel like coming ...but I come in, last year I would not have hesitated. This year I do---I come. Now if I'm very sick, I'll stay home.
>
> I just know that if one of us stays out here, it's chaotic. That's just it; and we've agreed that we don't want substitutes because we don't feel somebody can come in here and actually handle the children correctly or understand the program. So it's just one of these things where if I stay out just because it's a day when I don't feel like putting up with the kids, it's not going to do any good because someone here is going to take a lot of flak, I know it.
>
> Taped Interview
> March, 1971

There were few teacher absences during the year at North and most were for legitimate illnesses. (Faculty absences average 10-15% at most junior high schools---it is a recognized and semi-accepted tradition for teachers occasionally to be absent if they feel in need of a rest from the students.) Jeffersons' sense of team commitment suffered during the year under an onslaught of team member absences. In February and March, absence of other team members was repeatedly mentioned by the teachers as the reason their team was not functioning as well as it could. Some of the absences were single-day ones; others, however, kept a team member out for a week or several weeks at a time. At Jefferson, there was not the urgent need for attendence that the North team members felt. If a Jefferson team member was absent, the larger system---Jefferson Junior High School---found a substitute for him; the other team members might not even be aware of one member's absence unless the students told them.

This lack of real interdependence was not what the team members at Jefferson had anticipated; Helen spoke of the team members' need for each other early in the school year:

> It keeps everybody on their toes because it's not as though you're always being watched, but you're expected to do your share; and some teachers tend to slack off, you know, "well, we'll do this or I'll make up for this tomorrow." Some teachers do get trifling, if I may use the word, but I think the team keeps everybody more alert.
>
> Taped Interview
> October, 1970

Jefferson team members did tend "to slack off" as the year progressed. As early as October, the writer noticed a waning of enthusiasm for team work among the members, and included the following observation in her notes: "I wondered how soon that excitement would go away and how easy it would be for them to fall into the pattern of teaching those kids, knowing that people they knew were also teaching them, but not really using that information very well. It could be they need something concrete to work on as a group so the team has some meaning other than just sharing kids."

Definition of Team Concerns

Another factor related to feelings about the importance of the group and sense of responsibility toward it, was the willingness to broaden team concerns, markedly different at the two schools. At Jefferson the team was strictly a professional arrangement, the group never discussed what would be considered "personal" issues: absenteeism of group members, disciplinary styles of the teachers, personal crises such as the one Elaine underwent after her incident with the student. These issues were, without directly stating it, out-of-bounds for team discussion. Evaluating the team's progress at the end of the year, Helen was ambivalent about whether the team should have brought up more things at meetings. She remembered from the summer at the Advancement School that the group was advised to spend time at every meeting talking about the way the members felt, "airing our gripes and grievances." She felt that the fact that the group did not do that caused the members to keep a lot of things in---things that perhaps should have been discussed.

The North team maintained a very broad definition of areas which were of team concern---from personal problems of individual team members to differences of opinion on the ways students should be disciplined:

> I think that basically we have functioned the way that we wanted to. We still remain honest, which is something we committed ourselves to this summer. We are very forthright in discussing things with one another;

> we really have never held anything back and I think that's really important. We never went inward, we've always been outward toward the team. And I think our cohesiveness as a team exists the same way now as it did before.
>
> Edith, Taped Interview
> May, 1971

This willingness to be honest with each other and to work on their differences---sometimes in long, non-productive meetings held after school hours or in the evening---was linked by the team members to the importance they attached to the team concept. As one team member said in March, "I feel that all of us are committed to the job and are committed, not only to do our own job for our own satisfaction, but for the satisfaction of the team, and that we're very concerned that every member feel some sense of accomplishment with what has happened here."

Competition

Teachers generally work in isolation in most school situations; neither their successes nor their failures are shared with fellow teachers. No one actually knows what happens in another's classroom, except through hearsay, student comments or the little that a teacher himself might volunteer. In large junior high schools it is even difficult for the principal to be aware of each teacher's classes. At Jefferson the principal spent much of his time handling discipline and patroling the halls, alert to potential trouble.

Teachers tend to feel that no one cares about their work; for instance, the North teachers talked about how lonely the preceding year had been, how lonely all their years of teaching were. Working closely with a group of teachers certainly reduced the isolation, to an enormous degree at North, somewhat at Jefferson. The reactions to this closeness were mixed. It was difficult for teachers to get used to a new arrangement and they were not certain after all that they wanted someone that closely attuned to their everyday working style. The closer the team, of course, the more potentially dangerous and potent might be the influence of team members on each other. At North a strong sense of competition developed among the team members; at Jefferson there was initially great fear which subsided as the cohesiveness of the group never materialized.

In October, Mel stated that without the team he "would feel more my own man, and I wouldn't be worried that maybe I'd expose the kids to something they really objected to, or if I did one thing on certain days that they wouldn't go into somebody else's class and say that---or wouldn't come running back to me and way, 'well why don't you do that?'" Steve viewed this comparison between the classes in a more positive light, perhaps because he was a more confident teacher:

> Then there's the big advantage working with the kids---you get to know how they work with other people. If they're doing very well with everybody else and doing poorly with you, you know it's you, and you can look at what you're doing and why you're not reaching the kids and correct it ...or try.
>
> Taped Interview
> March, 1971

The fear of comparison with others felt by every teacher who begins working in a team situation was summarized early in the year by Mel very well:

> Last year as a teacher, it was very simple. Like if one day, to be quite honest, I had a bad night or a bad day the day before, like if I wanted to kind of have the kids do something from a book or something and I wasn't up to it (teaching) it was very easy to do. This is very honest. I know all teachers during the year have these days, but this year I was afraid, well everybody's going to be looking at me.
>
> Taped Interview
> October, 1970

This comparison between styles, coupled with the feeling of never being able to relax into old ways of functioning, was particularly strong at North. There the building was so small, teachers could not escape the awareness,day-to-day, of the ways the other team members functioned. Sue remarked in October that the whole team had discovered things about each other which they were not aware of before they actually worked together; but she said "you either accept them---or if you reject them, you have to try to do something about it, especially if it affects the team's functioning."

At the end of the year, Edith was quite candid about the effect this comparison had had on her teaching---she felt a strong sense of competition with the other female member on the team. She said that she had always felt during the year that the students liked and respected Sue more than they did her. She found herself admiring Sue so much and wanting the same relationship with the students that Sue had that she began to try to act like Sue, using the same tone of voice, the same style of discipline. The attempt made her "not know who you are," but "when I'm being rational about the comparison, I can understand it."

Mike ruefully acknowledged this competitive aspect of team functioning as one of the primary differences in his relationship with students between his year on the team and the year before:

> If I had had these kids this year the same as I would have had them last year, they would have probably left at the end of the year loving me. They would have said, "Mr. ______ is one of the best teachers in math and one of the best teachers in the whole school." They would have said, "we've been out to Mr. ______'s home, we know his wife, we know his son; he's really a great teacher." And the primary reason that I don't think the majority of the kids feel this way is because they now are exposed to four great teachers.
>
> Taped Interview
> May, 1971

The Consultant as a Member of the Team

The consultant's role in the team was not a very well defined one; some of the lack of definition was good because it provided the consultant with the flexibility to devise a role appropriate to the team. Some of it, however, created a problem for both the consultant and the team as to what the consultant was supposed to do. This was especially important at North, but both schools experienced the frustration of trying to work out the consultant's role.

> I was given very little preparation for the consultant's role, very little. I came in the week before and that was it. But I was told you are not to impose your feelings upon...this is the miniteam; you are supposed to facilitate that which the miniteam wishes to do. You throw in if you have reservations about something. You say, 'well, I have a few years of experience in schools too, perhaps you ought to consider thus and so.' And that is about the way you can do it. Now I'm learning as well as they, because this is as new to me as it is to them.
>
> North Consultant, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

The learning process at North took much of the school year, including the team's involvement in the marathon meeting (described in Part I), to work out the consultant's role. The North team members described their differing impressions about the consultant's role in March:

> I view the consultant actually as a master teacher. Someone who's free but yet has this ability to step back into the classroom when called upon. I view the consultant as someone who really ties you together, who has free time to find out what's new and bring it back to you.
>
> Sue, Taped Interview

> This (question of what is the consultant's role) is very hard for me to answer because since the beginning of the school year, one of the things that has bothered me is her---not as a person---but what's she supposed to be doing, how I should use her as a teacher and what her role should be. I kind of look at it something like, she has a job, she's getting paid money for it, so she should be doing something. But for a long time I couldn't see her doing very much that was helping the Annex.
>
> Edith, Taped Interview

It is clear that the consultant was not viewed as another member of the team---in either school. A clear indication of her different status from the other team members was that she was answerable to the Advancement School. Initially, each had to spend one day a week in the Advancement School building; in the Spring, that was expanded to two days a week. None of the consultants at any PAS affiliated school carried a regular teaching load or even regular classes. The Jefferson team shared Sue's evaluation of the consultant as one who was free to help the team in a number of ways. At Jefferson, though, the consultant played a more obvious leadership role than the consultant at North did. One team member at Jefferson said that "everyone looks to (the consultant) as the leader outside the group." Her job was to give suggestions and to do a lot of errands for the team.

The consultant's role was both more demanding and less potentially satisfying at Jefferson than it was at North, though North teachers were insistent about their need for the position. The team began with such great odds against its succeeding, that it would have taken an heroic effort on the part of the consultant to pull it together. It was easy at Jefferson to lose sight of the larger goal, being caught up in the immediate problems of the junior high school and the difficulties of accomplishing anything. At a school like Jefferson, the team was the consultant, essentially; there was no other way to define it. When she became depressed or lost interest, so did the team.

If the team members were uncertain or contradictory in their expectations about the role of the consultant, those feelings were matched by the consultants' own ambivalence:

> Well, I guess I should say that I'm careful about not overstepping bounds and perhaps this has helped in knitting us a little better. I don't try to take over, or tell them or dictate or direct if possible, because I think it would be resented. I had a little bit of that at the beginning when I thought I was just being helpful, and I had some, well, reflections of resentment, so I sort of backed off. And the group has natural leadership---there's no vacuum there that I have to fall into.

North Consultant, Taped Interview
May, 1971

> There are times when I feel like I'm not really needed. The times when I really get down, you know, when I get depressed about something, when I get bored. I think that probably they do need someone, you know. I don't know whether it should be me, what kind of personality that person should be, but do feel they need someone.
>
> Jefferson Consultant, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

The teams did need someone, they needed someone with the independent status of a consultant, someone who was free to be the liaison between the principal and the team, someone who could help the teams find the materials necessary to carry out a team approach. However, the consultants needed a meeting in the beginning of the year to define clearly their relationship to the teams, clearer directives than were given either teams, or consultants, when the year began. Several of the team members recommended that the consultants go through a special training program during the summer in the skills necessary to be consultants to school teams. Each of the consultants was new; each was defining her own concept of the job at the same time she was defining her relationship to a group of people.

Use Of Meeting Time

General Structure of Meetings

From the outset, Jefferson and North differed markedly in the amount of meeting time at their disposal and in the importance each attached to meetings. Jefferson's schedule was such that they were rostered to one free period a week for meetings. They were allowed to meet in the principal's office, a place where they were subject to many interruptions; occasionally if the principal had another meeting scheduled for his office, the team moved elsewhere. (One meeting in November was held in a 4 foot by 6 foot counselor's office where six people---the team, the consultant and the writer---sat pressing knees, unable to move for the 40-minute meeting.)

At North, several factors made the meetings more extensive and more deliberate in nature. 1) At the time their meetings were scheduled, the teachers were usually together anyway, eating lunch in the staff room where their desks were; it was fairly easy to call an end to the general talk and begin a serious meeting. (At Jefferson, teachers were coming from many different classrooms; often an interruption could delay or prevent a member's presence at meetings.) 2) North had a more flexible time schedule than Jefferson: their lunch period and meeting period were back-to-back. Often they took only a few minutes for lunch, or if there were a number of things to discuss, would begin the meeting during lunch. 3) Similarly, at the end of the time allotted, North was not under the same pressure as Jefferson to end the meeting; often their meetings ran well over the time when the students were back in the annex for the last period. This time was always punctuated with loud, alarming noises from the students as they raced around the building with little teacher supervision; nevertheless, it provided the team with the flexibility necessary to emphasize the importance of the team. (Jefferson teachers had classes to teach in widely separate areas of the building after their meetings.)

Perhaps as a consequence of these differences, North spent more than twice the amount of time Jefferson did in meetings, as

	Total Meeting Time (In Minutes)		Meetings Observed		Average Time Per Meeting (In Minutes)		Average # Topics Introduced	
	J	N	J	N	J	N	J	N
Oct.-Dec.	247	618	7	8	35.3	77.2	5.4	8.1
Jan.-Feb.	227	471	6	5	37.8	94.2	8.0	8.2
March-May	178	417	5	5	35.6	83.4	7.6	9.6
Total	652	1606	18	18	36.2	83.6	6.9	9.0

TABLE IV

COMPARISON BETWEEN JEFFERSON AND NORTH IN USE OF MEETING TIME OVER THREE TIME PERIODS.

Table IV shows. The total amount of time spent in meetings declined for each team during the year but the differences between the two teams remained constant. This finding is only a partial result of the fact that Jefferson had less time allotted to it to meet: they also tended to value it less than North. There was a possible 55-minute block of meeting time available to Jefferson each week, yet the meetings always began fifteen and twenty minutes late; as a result, the group tended to spend an average of 36 minutes a week meeting together, hardly time to plan an adequate program for 170 students. This is a devastating figure when one remembers the fact that the Jefferson teachers rarely saw each other outside the meetings, did not lunch together nor spend any other free periods in team company, apparently by choice. The North team, in constant contact with one another, used more than the time scheduled to them for meetings, on the average.

Neither team had an agenda for its meetings though there were half-hearted attempts in each to institute one. For a while Edith kept a list tacked to the wall at North on which team members were to write important things which should be covered in the next meeting. This list was hardly ever taken down when the meeting began and by November, was ignored. (In November, the list,graying and dusty, contained the notation that an upcoming trip in October should be discussed at the next meeting.) At Jefferson, the consultant made the agendas for the first half of the year; when she did not come to a meeting, the team members did not know what to discuss. At Jefferson, Steve occasionally brought in lists which tended to be question-and-answer type problems, not issues for discussion.

An interesting finding (as shown in Table IV) is that at the Jefferson meetings nearly as many topics were introduced for discussion as at the North meetings. This indicates, of course, that much less time was spent on each topic at Jefferson than at North. Jefferson meetings contained many digressions, anecdotal story-telling, and interruptions (each of these tallied as the introduction of a new topic); their meetings tended to be a quick series of presentations of issues without time for involved discussion or much reflection on the problem. North, without the time pressure, could afford a more sustained exploration of one issue.

Topics Discussed at Meetings

The writer was an observer at most of the team meetings, taking notes of the topics introduced, who introduced each one, the amount of time spent on each, the number of digressions and the eventual resolution. After each meeting, the writer recorded her observations, including a notation of all decisions reached in the meeting. The meeting notes and the observations were analyzed, and several distinct types of concerns emerged. Each meeting was "scored" for the amount of time spent on each of these concerns: program planning, planning of special events, administrative detail, specific students, lesson planning, the larger school setting, personal problems, team functioning, and general talk. (These areas are described in detail in Table V.) Also noted, was the resolution of each topic: decision reached, no decision reached, or no decision necessary.

For both North and Jefferson program planning took the most or

CATEGORIES		TIME PERIODS			
		Oct-Dec	Jan-Feb	March-May	Total
1. Program Planning: team coordination, general planning, (changing sections, schedules).	(J)	34.0%	19.4%	5.1%	21.0%
	(N)	42.2	58.4	33.6	44.9
2. Planning Special Events: trips, general assemblies, activities out of the ordinary.	(J)	28.7	-0-	9.0	13.3
	(N)	10.7	-0-	13.2	8.0
3. Administrative Detail: Announcements, usually needing no team decision	(J)	13.0	4.9	25.8	13.6
	(N)	13.1	4.0	11.3	9.8
4. Students: Discussion of student behavior, sharing information, anecdotes, complaints.	(J)	6.1	37.9	30.3	23.8
	(N)	5.5	7.0	3.8	5.5
5. Curriculum Interaction: sharing across disciplines, planning joint lessons.	(J)	1.6	2.6	-0-	1.5
	(N)	15.7	6.2	2.4	9.0
6. General School Problems: Discussion of larger school, and problems with the team.	(J)	-0-	19.8	7.3	8.9
	(N)	1.1	.8	10.1	3.5
7. Personal Problems: Individual team member's problems with team, classes or students.	(J)	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
	(N)	7.3	4.5	15.6	8.7
8. Team Functioning: Focus on team operations, interactions, productivity, direction.	(J)	6.9	3.5	1.1	4.1
	(N)	2.1	13.2	7.7	7.1
9. Trivia: general talk, not related to team activities.	(J)	9.7	11.9	21.3	13.6
	(N)	2.3	5.9	2.4	3.4

TABLE V

COMPARISON BETWEEN JEFFERSON AND NORTH IN PERCENTAGE OF TIME SPENT IN SEVERAL CATEGORIES OVER THREE TIME PERIODS.

nearly the most time in meetings; almost half of the meeting time at North was spent in this category, a logical necessity since they were creating their own program. Jefferson began the year with a third of their meeting time devoted to planning the team program; this amount declined drastically over the year to occupy only 5% of their time at the end---it was, of course, more difficult to plan a program at Jefferson; their one big restructuring plan was vetoed, leaving them with little incentive to devote much time to this area.

Another planning category, *planning for special events*, waxed and waned in importance for both teams---both teams went through a period when they did *no* planning for trips or assemblies. An interesting finding is that variation in the amount of time spent in *administrative detail* is in almost direct proportion to the amount of planning for trips: the more trips, the more meeting time spent in clearing up the logistics of the operation. Administrative detail seemed generally a poor category to allot much meeting time to---it usually involved items about which the team needed to be informed but did not need to make a decision (e.g., what time the busses were coming, a reminder that parental permission slips must be signed, etc.). Some of this at a meeting was unavoidable but much of it could have been handled in other ways, through notes to each other or a team memo; a significant distress signal for any team would seem to be the discovery that much more than 10% of its meeting time was being spent covering this type of items. (At Jefferson, 26% of the meeting time in the last third of the year went into administrative details.)

One of the most critical areas of difference between the two teams was in the use of meeting time to discuss particular students; the teams began the year very similarly, spending only about 5% of their meeting time in this area, but by the middle third of the year differences were sharply apparent. North continued this as a low priority category for discussion whereas at Jefferson it became the number one area, requiring more time than any other. Much of this discussion was of little substantive value to the team; it involved complaints about students, relating and comparing anecdotes about student behavior---the type of discussion one might have over coffee in the teacher's lounge. Only a third of the time was a topic in this category introduced which called for the team to make a decision of some sort (See Table VI); most of the time no decision was necessary. It should be noted that this was perhaps the easiest category for a team to spend its precious meeting time on---it was something the members had immediately in common and great caution would have been required to prohibit the time from being wasted in such discussions.

Neither team did much joint lesson planning and, reasonably, neither devoted much meeting time to the subject. Cross-discipline curriculum planning is a field for which teachers needed careful preparation; it was not an easy area to attack; there seemed no clear way of going about it. The few times the topic came up at Jefferson (never during the last third of the year) it was dropped without any decision by the team; North got a little further along but not much. The lack of time spent by the Jefferson team in this category was particularly important since the group had defined itself (during the summer) solely in terms of its cross-discipline goals.

The importance the larger school setting had for a team seemed dependent on how closely involved the team must be with the larger school. There was little involvement for North until the end of the year when they were planning their next year's program; for Jefferson, there was sometimes a great deal, at those times when their plans involved restructuring the team in any large-scale way. The functioning of the larger school was of great concern to Jefferson team members because it had a day-to-day effect on their own functioning.

As noted earlier, certain categories were considered out-of-bounds for discussion by the Jefferson team. The North team's efforts in the area of discussing personal problems of team members might lend credence to the Jefferson belief that such things were inappropriate---none of the discussion in this area was ever resolved at a regular team meeting. However, another point of view is that these issues are of vital concern to individual team members and some forum must be provided for the introduction of these issues; and that perhaps another mechanism is needed for the resolution of these concerns. (North created the mechanism it needed in its two marathon, three-hour meetings outside of regular team time.) Jefferson team members never allowed the team to reach even the first stage---introduction of personal issues.

Team functioning was a similar category but one a little removed from individual problems and more related to the team as a whole. It,too, was a category which touched more on the emotional and personal levels than the objective. By the end of the year Jefferson was spending virtually no meeting time on this topic while for North it continued to be an area of some importance. At Jefferson, the consultant was the team member who consistently introduced team functioning as an area of concern; when she received little encouragement from the other members for her effort, she too ceased introducing the topic. At North, team functioning was especially important to Edith and to some extent to everyone else as well, though she most often initiated the discussions.

Another critical area of difference in the two team's use of time was the amount of time "wasted" at the meetings. General talk or trivia occupied each group's time to some extent but the extent was crucial. North maintained a fairly low level of time spent in this area---team members saw each other so often there was little need to "chat" during meetings. At Jefferson, trivia took up a fifth of their meeting time in the last third of the year. Sometimes whole meetings were categorized as general talk without focus or purpose. Adding that total to the time spent discussing students and the time spent on administrative details, one arrives at the distressing figure of 77% of all meeting time spent in non-productive concerns for the Jefferson team during the last third of the year.

Decision Making

Neither team had a good record for making decisions during the normally scheduled meeting time (See Table VI). Some areas were difficult to make decisions in for both teams: each found it almost impossible to make any cross-discipline decisions in a

CATEGORIES	DECISION MAKING			
	Decision Reached	No Decision Reached; Topic Dropped	No Decision Necessary	
1. Program Planning: team coordination, general planning, (changing sections, schedules).	31.6%	31.6%	36.8%	(J)
	37.3	58.8	3.9	(N)
2. Planning Special Events: trips, general assemblies, activities out of the ordinary	7.1	78.6	14.3	(J)
	53.8	46.2	-0-	(N)
3. Administrative Detail: Announcements, usually needing no team decision	26.3	5.3	68.4	(J)
	15.6	3.1	81.2	(N)
4. Students: Discussion of student behavior, sharing information, anecdotes complaints.	20.6	11.8	67.6	(J)
	26.6	26.6	46.6	(N)
5. Curriculum Interaction: sharing across disciplines, planning joint lessons.	-0-	100.0	-0-	(J)
	10.0	40.0	50.0	(N)
6. General School Problems: Discussion of larger school, and problems with the team.	30.0	40.0	30.0	(J)
	25.0	25.0	50.0	(N)
7. Personal Problems: Individual team member's problems with team, classes or students	-0-	-0-	-0-	(J)
	-0-	100.0	-0-	(N)
8. Team Functioning: Focus on team operations, interaction productivity, direction.	28.6	57.1	14.3	(J)
	18.2	45.4	36.4	(N)
9. Trivia: general talk, not related to team activities.	-0-	-0-	100.0	(J)
	-0-	-0-	100.0	(N)
TOTAL	19.4	26.6	54.0	(J)
	24.7	39.6	35.6	(N)

TABLE VI

A COMPARISON BETWEEN JEFFERSON AND NORTH IN DECISION MAKING team meeting or to resolve any problems about the way the team was functioning. Other areas differentiated the two teams: for example, Jefferson made practically no decisions about plans for special events during their meetings, while North made many. What this meant for a team like Jefferson was that one individual ended up making all decisions for a major outing with little team involvement, and then, of course, confronted the problem of how to communicate those decisions to the other members. In the planning of programs, North left more things up in the air than Jefferson did---but they tended to discuss many more things of substance, ideas which called for decisions, than Jefferson.

Overall, North tended to discuss more substantive issues at its meetings, more issues about which a decision could be reached. The North group made more decisions than Jefferson and they also dropped more issues without a decision. (Part of this dropping of issues was due to the nature of topics discussed, including personal problems of team members.) The Jefferson meetings contained far more items about which no decision was necessary (anecdotes, administrative detail, etc.) until by the last third of the year, such topics were 50% of the ones presented in meetings! The yearly average for Jefferson shows that 54% of their topics needed no decision (39.6%) or were trivia unrelated to the team (14.4%).

North was a team more insistent upon group participation in a decision than Jefferson. Hal termed "the way our decisions were worked out---sometimes in long, tedious,sort of collective reasoning," as "more effective." Sue described her dissatisfaction in March with the way the North team was making decisions, because she felt it did not allow enough group involvement:

> One thing I remember Rudd (the summer consultant) told us is that when we have this time to meet, that we should wall ourselves up, move to another room, you shouldn't be at your desk where you're going to be picking up papers. Make an agenda, follow that agenda and that's it...And we just never got around to it; I guess every time we tried to have a meeting there's been something pressing to handle, or someone has to go to North to pick up something or someone's been called out and one person in the team is out for a certain amount of time. And it's just been that if you were out we'd go ahead and meet and we'll let you know what we decided on, you know...which is bad.
>
> Sue, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

Perhaps Sue was right, perhaps the North method was far from ideal; at least, however, it was a team which had (and exercised) the option of telling other team members about decisions the group had made. Communication was constant because it was unavoidable---if there was a delay of a day or two in communicating a decision to a team member, that member would be angry. At Jefferson, team members did not see each other sometimes for an entire week.

Leadership

A fact likely to draw out the decision-making process for both teams was that neither had a designated leader. The North team decided in the summer that it wanted no leader, and given the strong personalities and different skills within the group, the decision was probably a wise one. With the exception of Sue, the team members at North actually shared leadership responsibility pretty equally, with Edith having slightly more leadership responsibility than the others.[34]

Jefferson too was not dominated by a single individual. Team members tended to assign leadership positions more to Steve and the consultant than to others. But neither Steve nor the consultant wanted to be the leaders of the team; in the Fall Steve expressed his reticence about the position:

> I don't want to see anybody really take a dominant role---like today I took a dominant role. I didn't want to do it but I sat there for the first five minutes and they talked about Mel having the virus and we just can't afford to blow forty-five minutes, we have too much work to do. I think it's bad if one of us takes a dominant role because then it's going to stifle all the things the people are going to say. That's why I tend to be pretty quiet at the meetings.
>
> Steve, Taped Interview
> October, 1970

In March the Jefferson consultant talked about her role in the team, expressing her concern about the fact that she was the one always to initiate discussions about large group team activities and such. As she said, she did not want to be the one who did the planning; "I'd rather see them initiate the idea and the planning and what have you." The consultant was seen as the leader at Jefferson, particularly taking major responsibility for carrying out decisions and setting up trips and new projects; when she was out, the group had no one internally to turn to. They relied on her almost exclusively and much as she wanted it to change, intrinsic leadership never developed during the year.

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[34] Interactive patterns of both teams are depicted in Table VII: Each team was observed five times with a "Who-To-Whom" tabulation--a method of analyzing a meeting by assessing the direction of talk, whether to individual members or the group as a whole. Those tabulations are difficult to combine between meetings. Table VII contains results of one meeting for each team, the meeting chosen

Jefferson

	Elaine	Helen	Mel	Steve	Consultant	Writer	Group
% of Times Speaking	16.8	23.9	14.6	19.9	24.8	-0-	
% of Times Spoken To	6.1	18.1	12.4	23.4	18.6	.4	20.8

North

	Edith	Hal	Mike	Sue	Consultant	Writer	Group
% of Times Speaking	26.9	20.7	19.7	7.7	24.0	1.0	
% of Times Spoken To	24.0	13.9	11.1	4.3	15.9	1.4	29.3

TABLE VII

WHO-TO-WHOM TABULATIONS OF AN ILLUSTRATIVE MEETING IN MAY FOR BOTH JEFFERSON AND NORTH

The North team relied on members for different skills; they had actually put into practice, without specifying it, the type of leadership arrangement where each team member does his specialty. (This was not quite so utopian as it sounds---the team depended on each member aggressively and clearly to define his area of leadership; when Sue did not, she virtually had no leadership role.) Hal was the "leader" in student affairs--he handled most of the after-school programs and the student council; Mike was the head

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34 (cont'd)
because all team members were present and it was the same time of year.

teacher of the annex---he spoke for it at the main building, he talked a lot to parents, handled visitors and so forth; Edith was the team administrator---she did a lot of the nitty-gritty work of making schedules, typing memos, keeping records and such. Sue actually took leadership in planning and implementing trips but she tended to down-play her role at meetings and her leadership was less evident. The consultant's role eventually became defined as the person who was to be in touch with School District headquarters and the District Superintendent's office.

A good example of the way this leadership pattern worked was in a May meeting the team had with the principal and vice-principal to outline the program for the next year. Hardly any preparation had been made for this meeting and it began badly with the vice-principal presenting the situation as hopeless in terms of rostering requirements. The writer's observations made at the end of the meeting include the following:

> Edith generally handled the vice-principal very well. She's very good with rosters (a skill I envy and don't understand) and she has had experience with them so he tended to listen to her---which was quite important for the group to get what they wanted. Just when things were looking impossible to work out, Edith did some figuring at her desk quietly for about five minutes and handed him a finished roster. Thirty-five minutes were then spent with her convincing him it would work---a good stroke of leadership.
>
> Lots of decisions were made today and one of the more positive aspects was the fact that the group, with little reflection or discussion among themselves, seemed to have a group "mind" about what they wanted. No time wasted in their disagreeing or working things out---instead they faced the principal and vice-principals as a unit, flexible, but tending to agree with each other about what was important and what they needed. A good sign of strength.

In a meeting of a similar nature at Jefferson at approximately the same time, a different interaction pattern emerged. The consultant became the spokesman for the team; very little was said by the rest of the team members and the majority of the discussion took place between the consultant and the principal. Team members did not appear to feel they could engage in an open discussion of the issues with the principal; and consequently, they did not make their wishes known very strongly.

CHAPTER SIX

THE EFFECTS OF THE MINISCHOOLS ON THE STUDENTS

Students in both minischools changed considerably during the year-long program; some of these changes were primarily developmental ones, changes common to most children as they move from pre-adolescence to adolescence. Other changes appear to have been more directly program-related.

A variety of data was collected during the year, ranging from "objective" pre-post measures of achievement gains to more subjective attitudinal measures (interviews, questionnaires) to the highly subjective views of teachers about change in the students. Altogether they represent an attempt to assess the changes which were taking place in students and to place these changes in the perspective of adolescent development.

Students were given the Gates-McGinity Reading Test at the beginning and end of the year; their sixth-grade Iowa Achievement Test scores were compared to their scores at the end of the seventh grade; attendance was monitored. Twice during the year, all students in both programs completed a sentence completion questionnaire, and a randomly selected sample of twenty students from each minischool was interviewed using a set of structured in-depth questions about the programs. Student writing was collected; several students from each program were interviewed on tape, and the teachers' interviews included questions about the effects of the programs on the students.[35]

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[35] The tables resulting from the scoring and analyses of these data

This chapter presents an overview of the achievement and attitudinal changes in the students, provides an understanding of those changes in light of adolescent development, and assesses the appropriateness of the minischool model for the junior high school student.

Measured Changes in the Students

Achievement Gains

The overall achievement gains on both the Iowa Achievement Test and the Gates-McGinity Reading Test are reported in Tables VIII and IX. Both groups of students made more gains in their Iowa Achievement Test scores from sixth to seventh grade than students in those schools who were not in the minischools. On the composite score, Jefferson minischool students gained nearly a full year in the seventh grade while the other seventh graders at Jefferson gained better than half a year. North Annex students gained almost twice as much as non-annex North students. Students did not achieve gains of one year for their year in school at either minischool or in either junior high school. The minischool experience seemed to decelerate the rate of loss urban students undergo but it did not result in growth comparable to national norms.

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[35] (cont'd) would occupy more space than is useful in a report of this size; tables providing the breakdown of responses to the twelve sentence completions and the thirteen structured interview questions are available to anyone who desires them, and may be obtained by writing to the Research Department of the Pennsylvania Advancement School. The questions included in each instrument are provided in Appendix A.

Jefferson Junior High School

	Reading			Arithmetic			Composite		
	1971 G.E.	1970 G.E.	Difference	1971 G.E.	1970 G.E.	Difference	1971 G.E.	1970 G.E.	Difference
Minischool students	5.56	4.85	+.71	5.64	5.06	+.58	6.06	5.11	+.95
Other Seventh-graders	5.06	4.41	+.65	5.25	4.71	+.53	5.19	4.49	+.70
TOTAL SEVENTH GRADE	5.22	4.55	+.67	5.37	4.82	+.55	5.47	4.69	+.78

North Junior High School

	Reading			Arithmetic			Composite		
	1971 G.E.	1970 G.E.	Difference	1971 G.E.	1970 G.E.	Difference	1971 G.E.	1970 G.E.	Difference
Minischool (Annex) students	5.30	4.72	+.58	5.29	4.87	+.42	5.62	4.81	+.81
Other Seventh-graders	5.70	5.18	+.51	5.50	5.23	+.27	5.74	5.29	+.45
TOTAL SEVENTH GRADE	5.60	5.07	+.52	5.45	5.14	+.32	5.71	5.17	+.56

TABLE VIII

PERFORMANCE ON IOWA TESTS OF STUDENTS IN PAS-AFFILIATED MINISCHOOLS AT JEFFERSON AND NORTH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER SEVENTH-GRADERS IN THOSE RESPECTIVE SCHOOLS

(G.E. = GRADE EQUIVALENT)

	NORTH		JEFFERSON	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Gates-McGinity Reading Test (Grade Equivalents)				
Vocabulary	4.8	5.3	5.0	5.3
Comprehension	4.5	4.9	4.7	4.8

Attendance Figures: 1970-71	Annex	Whole 7th Grade	Entire School	Mini-School	Whole 7th Grade	Entire School
	88.9%	88.9%	88.9%	90.3%	88.9%	88.3%

TABLE IX

COMPARATIVE READING AND ATTENDANCE FIGURES:
NORTH AND JEFFERSON

Jefferson students did not maintain the same level of gains on the Gates-McGinity Reading Test. Table IX shows that they gained only one-tenth of a year on Comprehension and three-tenths on Vocabulary. North students, however, showed the same rate of gain that they had on the achievement tests, about half a year's growth.[36] Attendance rates for students in both programs are nearly identical, with Jefferson's minischool attendance being slightly higher than Jefferson Junior High School as a whole.

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[36] There is no obvious explanation for this difference; differences in testing procedure (each team did its own reading test administration while the Iowa Tests were handled by the larger school organization) could be a possible answer.

An analysis of the Iowa test results and the reading scores shows initial differences in the North and Jefferson student bodies. Although North Junior High School students usually score somewhat higher on the Iowa Achievement tests than Jefferson students (see Part I, Chapter I), the seventh graders in the North Annex program had lower achievement scores than did the students in the Jefferson Minischool. Jefferson Minischool students began the year considerably better off than both North annex students and the rest of Jefferson Junior High School. The minischool did not have a representative group, in part because of their decision to include the extra section (7-5) in the minischool. A comparison of stanine scores (scores on a 1-9 scale which place a student's score in relation to others in Philadelphia)--see Table X--portrays the difference more dramatically. The mean for Philadelphia is a stanine score of 5; more than 50% of North Annex students had stanine scores below the mean for Philadelphia Public Schools; whereas only 35% of the Jefferson minischool students were below the mean.

It is tempting to explain all of Jefferson's gains in terms of this initial difference in student body. However, scrutiny of Table X reveals that it is the low students in each team who tended to gain the most. Students with stanine scores of one moved a full point up the scale or more by the post-testing. But students whose stanine scores were either seven or eight tended to stay the same or to lose; only a few gained.

These findings of the achievement tests are in line with what the teachers in the programs felt happened during the year. North teachers in particular felt strongly that they had neglected their

STANINE LEVEL on 6th Grade Test	NORTH Number of Students	 % of Group	 Average Gain(Loss) in 7th Grade Stanine Score	JEFFERSON Number of Students	 % of Group	 Average Gain(Loss) in 7th Grade Stanine Score
1	13	12.3%	+1.53	20	15.5%	+1.25
2	0	0	0	1	.7%	+1.0
3	17	15.0%	+ .59	11	9.5%	+ .72
4	28	24.7%	+ .32	14	10.8%	+ .14
5	26	23.0%	+ .15	34	26.3	+ .32
6	21	18.5%	+ .23	36	27.8%	+ .36
7	6	5.3%	0	11	8.5%	- .09
8	2	1.7%	- .50	2	1.4%	+ .50
9	0	0	0	0	0	0

TABLE X

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SIXTH- AND SEVENTH-GRADE
STANINE LEVELS ON IOWA TEST COMPOSITE SCORES

"high" students in favor of the "low" ones. From the Fall throughout the year, they questioned their decision to heterogenously-group their students, not because it left the slower students behind but because they felt it penalized those who could go faster. At Jefferson the team's use of Advancement School materials in so many of the classes seemed to provide motivation and incentive for the slower students but without similar reward for the students who were better motivated. Also at Jefferson, where the classes are homogeneously grouped, several teachers (particularly Mel) remarked that they felt more comfortable and more "successful" with the slower groups.

Attitudinal Changes Toward the Minischool[37]

North and Jefferson students differed greatly in their initial reactions to being placed in the minischool and to the first few weeks of the program. When asked in October to complete the sentence---"So far I think the (North Annex/Jefferson Minischool) has been..."---27% of the North students responded very negatively (using words like "Terrible", "Horrible", "a Disgrace") while only 2% of the Jefferson students responded with that kind of hostility. Eighty percent of the Jefferson students thought the minischool was "great" or "exciting" or "interesting," whereas 67% of the North students thought the annex was just "o.k." or "not that good." Both groups' attitudes changed during the year, North's radically so. By the end of the year more of Jefferson's students thought the program was just okay or had some problems (27% instead of 12%).

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[37] Not all questions will be discussed in this section; some are covered in the section of this chapter dealing with adolescent development. Only those questions showing important pre-post changes are included here.

At North, on the other hand, where 35% of the students had been negative (either mildly or extremely so) at the beginning, only 8% were at the end of the year. Most (64%) had moved to opinions which were mildly or exceedingly positive.

The majority of students in both minischools responded that they were glad they had been put in the minischool, that they thought the minischool arrangement was a good one for seventh-graders and would recommend being in one to a sixth-grader just entering seventh-grade. They were less certain that the program was a good one for eighth-graders. The twenty Jefferson students interviewed said they were certain they would like to be in one for their own eighth-grade (though three fewer thought so at the end than had at the beginning); the twenty North students reversed their position during the year about whether they would like to be in another minischool: in the Fall, a majority said they would not; in the Spring, a majority said they would.

The reason for preferring the minischool arrangement and for having a good attitude toward it differed depending on the program. Initially, the Jefferson students thought that being a part of the minischool entitled them to more privileges and special activities, that the teachers cared more about them and were nicer to them and that they learned more and would want these same teachers again. By the end of the year, many students still felt this way but not with the same unanimity expressed earlier. More students at the end mentioned as reasons for liking the minischool that they had easy work in their minischool classes, that they did not have homework and that the minischool was a good experience because it represented a "break before high school." The primary reason given for recommending a minischool to a sixth-grade friend was almost more negative than positive: "it would not be as boring" as the regular roster.

Many students at Jefferson were upset at the end of the year that the minischool had not done more; they felt they had been deceived. Half the students interviewed at the end of the year said that the bad thing about the minischool was that the teachers had made promises they did not keep, that the minischool should have gotten together more or had rooms together. Two students out of twenty had forgotten what a minischool was---they could not say anything good or bad about it.

For the twenty North students their initial feelings about the annex were mixed; many felt it was not fair that they should be in an annex two years in a row and thus did not like this annex because they "did not like annexes in general." During its chaotic beginning, students tended to like the annex either because of the special privileges they got there---the break between classes when they could dance, the freedom---while others felt safer at the annex. They were glad they were not at the main building because of the fights that took place there or the fact that older boys shook down younger ones for money. Those two themes---the freedom and privileges of the annex, and the fear of North---persisted throughout the year and were dominant again at the end.

A theme not present at the beginning but which was frequently mentioned at the end of the year by North students was their belief that the teachers cared more about them at the annex. At the end of the year,half the students interviewed said that one of the good things about the annex was that "you could get to know the teachers." The belief that they knew their teachers and that the classes were better were the reasons given for recommending the annex to a sixth-grade friend. In the beginning of the year students had felt that the primary problems with the annex were administrative or physical ones: they did not like the building and thought it was overcrowded; they did not like the lunch program and the fact that they did not have lockers. By the end of the year, those complaints were less in evidence (though half the students were still upset about the lack of lockers). Their complaints at the end were more specific and less uniform.

Both student groups felt the effects of the larger institution of which they were a part. All the North students were convinced that the rest of North knew about them, and that for the most part, the attitudes of students and teachers were negative toward them. They expressed a preference which grew stronger during the year, though, for being in their own building rather than in a separate section of the main building. This preference had as its basis both the fear expressed about the students at North and their concern that other students would disturb their classes. Jefferson students also felt a separate building would be preferable and for the same reason---that the noise from the hall disturbed their classes inside the building. Jefferson students also felt that a separate building would help define them as a minischool. This lack of definition was also reflected in the fact that only six of the twenty students interviewed at Jefferson were sure that other students at the school knew about the minischool.

Attitudes Toward Teachers and Classes

Both Jefferson and North students appeared hesitant about expressing opinions about their teachers. The predominant description given by the two student bodies to questions about teachers was that they were "nice." They were "good," "fun," "kind," and "all right." When asked what teachers should do, almost a quarter of each group responded with the same generality: they should "be nice," "do good things" or "be kind." These sentiments changed in opposite directions for the two schools: 70% of the Jefferson students felt teachers were "nice" at the beginning but only 52.5% felt that way at the end of the year. North students, on the other hand, increased in positive feelings toward the annex teachers; in fact, in the Fall, 25% of the annex students described their teachers as "mean," "stinken," or "awful." In the Spring only 14% felt this way, a percentage similar to Jefferson's 12%. Between eight and ten percent of each student group named minischool or annex teachers at the end of the year as particularly good teachers or as being understanding.

Student"recommendations" for teacher behavior at the end of the year were less clustered around one type of response. Underlying many of the responses from both student groups was the idea that teachers should be closer to students, they should not be so strict, they should allow more free time and (at Jefferson particularly) they should not hit children (33% of the responses at Jefferson were of this type). However, a minority at both schools (17% at Jefferson, 11% at North) felt that their teachers ought to make the work more interesting (9%) or ought to teach more (5%).

When students were interviewed about why they liked particular classes they revealed in more depth their feelings about teachers; it is apparent in both schools that the class where they felt they learned the most and had the most fun was directly dependent on the teacher. Students in both schools tended to give the same reasons for picking a particular class as being the one they learned the most in; students agreed about the classes regardless of their individual abilities in a particular subject. Students tended in the beginning to pick the class (science in both schools) where they could name something specific that they did---like using microscopes or doing experiments. Students tended to feel they were learning in a class if they felt they were learning new things; they did not like those classes (English especially) where they felt they had already had the material, that it was "grammar school work."

Another important factor was how well the teacher explained something; part of this was affected by how well they liked the teacher but another part seemed to be related to how well the teacher could talk to them. Students did not like classes where they felt the work was too easy, the students were unruly and the teacher did not have control of the class.

At Jefferson, students chose the same class as the one where they felt they learned the most and the one where they felt they had the most fun. At North the students made a distinction between the two types of classes: throughout the year North students felt they learned the most in their science class; at the end of the year there was an even split between science and social studies as to the one they had the most fun in. (The primary reason given by those children who chose Social Studies was that they liked the teacher, that he was more "modern.")

All the students in both minischools were asked to name their favorite school subject on the sentence completion form at the beginning and end of the year. In the Fall, some 33% of each group named one of their minor subjects as their favorite. But by the end of the year only 19% of the North students and 7% of Jefferson students named a non-minischool class as their favorite. (At Jefferson only 12 responses out of 171 named minor subjects, evidence to support the Jefferson teachers' contention that their classes were better than the other Jefferson classes.) By the end of the year, North students were more spread out in their preferences for a particular class, divided between the three they had in the small classrooms: science first and then, close behind, math and Social Studies. Jefferson students were more clustered on one subject (showing perhaps the dominant influence of one teacher); 65% chose science as their favorite school subject at the end of the year.[38]

Students in both programs felt similarly about their grades: about three-quarters of each group interviewed felt that their grades were better than they had expected they would be. They attributed this to the fact that the teachers were better, that they paid better attention in the classrooms and that they were more interested. North students felt that some of their good grades were due to the work's having been easier at the annex; six out of twenty students interviewed felt they were not as ready for the eigth grade as other seventh-graders. Twelve of the twenty interviewed at Jefferson felt they were better prepared than the other seventh-graders. (North's program bore little relationship to that typically offered in the first year of junior high school; Jefferson teachers constantly impressed on their students that they were getting advanced work because of the minischool.)

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[38] The discription of Steve's style and instructional approach, presented in Chapter Four, perhaps indicates why he was the overwhelming favorite of Jefferson students.

In general, both groups of students ended the year feeling positive about their minischool experience and their teachers. Some of the "halo effect" had worn off the Jefferson students; they were not quite so enthusiastic at the end and they had real complaints about the lack of activities during the year. North students seemed to recover from their fairly-negative attitudes at the beginning and felt positive at the end. The dominant feeling was that they were glad they had had the experience and they would recommend it to others.

Both groups preferred the minischool classes to the others they were in; most liked the teachers but many felt the teachers could be warmer and more attentive to the students. At North there was a real fear that they had not learned as much during the year as other seventh-graders while Jefferson students were convinced they had learned more. Both these sentiments seem to reflect accurately the opinions of the teachers in the programs.

Adolescent Development

As students move into the seventh grade, there is a marked shift in adults' expectations of their behavior and level of maturity. These expectations may or may not coincide with a student's maturational level, either socially, emotionally or cognitively. In the seventh grade in a city school system, students are expected to become adjusted to being in a large building with a thousand or more other students; they are expected to go through as many as eight class periods a day, moving from one subject-matter to another, each taught by a different teacher. In addition to general care-taking responsibilities the seventh-grader is supposed to have mastered (like remembering a pencil, maintaining his locker and finding his classes), there are very specific and new expectations about his classroom behavior. He is expected to come to class and to orient himself to a new subject-matter and a new teacher within a very few minutes at the beginning of each period (often with a different seating arrangement to remember as well); he is expected to be able to discuss the implications of the subject under consideration; and he is expected to participate in an orderly fashion.

The expectations are uniform for all seventh-graders and yet not all seventh-graders are at the same point in development. The adolescent period which begins for most children sometime between the ages of eleven and fourteen is marked by accelerated growth and changes within individuals in their levels of maturity. The changes children are undergoing to become adolescents and the differences between them in that process have a profound effect on the educational experience.

Cognitive Development

For many students the seventh grade is the transitional period during which he moves from middle-childhood thought patterns to those characteristic of the adolescent; this change in cognitive functioning has been termed by Jean Piaget[39] as the move from concrete operations to formal operations, or in simpler terms, what David Elkind[40] called the move from describer to explainer. It is possible to find the distinct beginnings of later adolescent thought processes in some students and yet no sign of movement away from the concrete patterns in others.

The concrete child is concerned with specific and immediate information; he does not generalize from the immediate to the general. He structures reality in a step-by-step fashion, never relating it to a general conceptual frame of reference; what is possible, to his way of thinking, is only an extension of what is real and tangible. The child who has begun to move to the formal level is concerned with the hypothetical, has begun to be involved in his own thought processes, and has begun to think of general frameworks and the ideal as well as the real.

The different stages are clearly visible in the sentence-completion exercise undertaken by the students in the two mini-schools at the beginning of the year. One of the sentences to be completed in writing was "I wonder if..." The responses seemed to fall naturally into two categories: those which were concerned with the immediate and concrete and those which were concerned with more long-range, theoretical concepts. (A middle level was occupied with responses which seemed to be of a short-range nature belonging clearly in neither area.)

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[39] Inhelder, Barbel and Piaget, Jean. The Growth of Logical Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence. New York: Basic Books, 1958.

[40] Elkind, David, "Egocentrism in Adolescence," in Robert Grinder (editor). Studies in Adolescence, Second Edition. London: The Macmillan Company, Collier-Macmillan LTD., 1969.

When given such a lead, approximately thirty percent of the students in both minischools could think of only immediate and specific things to wonder about. These students wondered if "my mother is home"; if "I'm going some place today"; or if "we could get a later lunch time." They wondered if "my teacher is nice" and if "we will get homework." These types of responses were found at all levels of academic competence in Jefferson where the students were grouped homogeneously.[41]

Long-range concerns occupied the thoughts of approximately 45% of the students (with more North students in this category than Jefferson students). There was concern with the future and what was going to happen to them personally: I wonder if "I will become a nurse"; if "I'm going to be something"; if "I will get married"; if "I will be a dope-taker"; and if "I will grow up to be what I want to be." Some of the responses were hypothetical in nature, showing a concern for a broader reality than the school experience. They seemed to hint of a desire to understand what was possible and what was likely. Wondering about whether man would live on the moon, whether air pollution would ever be stopped, "we will have flying cars," "there are people on mars" or the "sun is a star," are examples of this type of concern.

Another long-range preoccupation of many students dealt with idealistic questions; these questions seemed to stem from an interest in understanding the nature of the world from a more theoretical point of view. Wondering if "things could be changed around in our world" and if "the world will ever become good" and if "people will ever realize the real trouble this world is in" indicate an idealistic concern for changing reality, and a belief that change is possible--both typical of the adolescent.

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[41] It is postulated by Piaget that these are stages which all children go through in development, though he feels that the brighter child may go through them at a slightly accelerated rate. In our case, a much larger number of concrete responses was found in the lower academic sections; however, it should be stressed that theoretical con-concerns were found at these levels and concrete concerns were found in the accelerated classes.

One of the biggest adjustments the concrete child must make in junior high school is moving between, and keeping the content straight in seven different classes. Most of the teaching is verbal and as Piaget and followers[42] have pointed out, the child can receive information verbally only if he is maturationally ready to do so. It is difficult for the child whose cognitive style consists of ordering material serially to keep all the different subjects straight; he has no overall conceptual frame of reference in which he can orient all the different subjects, and he finds himself confused.

> I don't like the minischool because we go to history all we get is homework. I know we suppose to have homework but she gives us so much homework. Half the time I get mix up with everything when we have a test the teachers give us a test on the same day. When we go home we have to study history, math, science and music, one student told the teacher she said how can I study all of these subjects, she said I always get history mix up with science.
>
> Written statement, October 1970
> Jefferson Minischool student

And another in a similar vein wrote:

> Mr.________ does so many experiments at science that you might get confused with one experiment with another then the next thing you know you could have created something that wouldn't have never occurred.

An additional problem faced by the concrete operational child in junior high school is his inability to conceptualize the theoretical purposes either of a particular subject matter or an organizational scheme, like the minischool. He is a participant in each new experience, activity or task but without an understanding of the relationship between the experiences or, the development in the subject over time. This inability makes it doubly difficult for him to remember from one class to the next, from one test to the next within a class, and helps explain his confusing such disparate subjects as science and history. He has nothing to anchor new experiences to, until such time as the movement to formal operations begins.

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[42] Peel, E.A., "Intellectual Growth During Adolescence," in Robert Grinder (editor) Studies in Adolescence, Second Edition. London: The Macmillan Company, Collier Macmillan LTD, 1969.

These differences in cognitive functioning make it apparent that teachers in junior high schools cannot rely solely on verbal materials. Children must be given physical experience with the curricular materials, a non-verbal "intuitive experience"[43] with the material. At Jefferson Helen gave her students an interesting assignment: they were to write an advertisement for nomads to come live in a city in 1000 B.C. She had been describing for several days what a city was like at that time and this was to be an exercise crystalizing for the students the differences between ancient cities and modern ones. Most of her accelerated students had no difficulty with the assignment: Their advertisements were witty and to the point. However, not one student in the lower academic sections produced an acceptable advertisement. Either the students wrote an advertisement for a modern city with radios and air conditioning and swimming pools, or they produced (copied) an existing advertisement from radio or television, advertising such things as Armour hot dogs or Zest soap.

Such an experience can be exasperating for a teacher who feels the students are being perverse or forgetful or are just too stupid. In reality, the difficulty lay with what was expected of the child. He was expected to visualize the way a city was in 1000 B. C. and, holding that vision constant, manipulate certain aspects of it to find what was most attractive for nomads at that time. Paiget's concrete child would have great difficulty with it.

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[43] Bruner, Jerome. The Process of Education. New York: Vintage Books, 1960.

Emotional Changes

Adolescence is a period of great emotional upheaval and turmoil, the beginnings of which are found in junior high schools. It is marked by an intense concentration on oneself as the child moves away from his family and seeks a separate identity as his own person. A significant part of his identity is determined by his relationship with his peers -- the adolescent is known for his "social" awareness. Emotional factors have a great influence on his relationship with adults, particularly teachers, and on his adjustment to the school situation as a whole.

The adolescent, both emotionally and cognitively, enters a period of egocentrism where he is highly conscious of his own reactions, of how the world relates to him and what place he holds in it. He is a very large center of his own universe (as he bumps into the rest of the world, his identity becomes considerably smaller). When the mini-school students completed the sentence, "I love people when they...." a majority of the responses concerned the way people related to them: when they..."love me,""are good to me," "are true friends," "give me money, presents," "understand me," "help me." Likewise, a friend is "someone trustworthy," someone "who's good to me, likes me, cares about me," "someone to turn to, who helps you." Sadness was defined by one North minischool student as "missing Sly and the Family Stone show at the Spectrum."

As the adolescent focuses on himself and his own reactions, he has an urgent need to establish an identity; he is seen by theorist Erik Erkinson[44] as sifting through various possibilities for a true identity. This concern can be seen vividly in the following statement written by a Jefferson student about the minischool:

> I hope the minischool will be next year in the 8th grade so we can do better things in the minischool will all go with us in 7th, 8th and 9th grades so that we can do very well in the 10th grade so that we do very well all through senior high and collage so that as soon as we get out of collage we can get a job that pays well so that we won't be able to walk around the streets looking, when all somebody who just came out of collage and just walk up and get a job that pays well so that you won't have to be living off your mother and father that's why I'm going to collage like my sister did.

At the end of the year the President of the North Annex wrote a letter to the students which was included in the Yearbook; after some short preliminary remarks about the program, she wrote:

> I never really expressed my feelings about getting elected President of the Annex. The only thing I have ever been elected president for was to a club or homeroom. I hope you feel I have done my job of being President of the annex. I also would like to thank you again for electing me President and I wish you all success at North next year.

The importance of peer relationships is perhaps at its height during the adolescent period. The seventh grade is the beginning of that awareness; many of the students, particularly the boys, are still very much preadolescent children defining their relationships in terms of physical prowess and fighting. ("Fear is when you told everybody you're going to beat the biggest girl in school and you're really afraid;" "Fear is when you're called out for a fight."--both written by girls.) However, sensitivity to peer pressure has definitely begun in the seventh grade and grows throughout the year.

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[44] Erikson, Erik. Identity: Youth and Crises. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1968.

Cliques are rapidly formed and dissolved; this frequent turnover creates a preoccupation among seventh-graders (and perhaps all adolescents) with trust and deceit. Sadness is "when your best friend turns against you." A friend is a person "who keeps secrets to himself" who "isn't two-faced." People are not to be trusted who tell secrets or "talk about me." This feeling becomes more pronounced through the year. (The percentage of responses falling in these categories grows.)

School is defined for many adolescents in terms of what it does for their social image. "School is a place to get new friends, not to see the same faces you know," wrote one North student. Indicating embarrassment in front of peers, another said, "school is dropping all your books in the hall when you have on a mini."

Adolescents are in the process of detaching themselves from adults, especially the great dependency they had on their parents through early childhood. Peers begin to provide the identity definitions which parents had supplied before; it has been pointed out, though,[45] that these definitions are not stable ones and adolescents keep shifting between allegience and reliance on adults and rebellious and disdainful independence. Every teacher of the adolescent child can testify to the confusing nature of this maturational process. On the one hand, students feel that teachers should "make way for the young folks" (reply of several North students in sentence completion); others feel that teachers should "be more strict" and "handle things when they go wrong." Adolescents (and those just beginning, like seventh-graders) are demanding their own freedom, insisting upon their individuality and indepencence. One North Annex student was incensed when a teacher questioned whether the sentiments expressed on an anti-war poster were his own rather than something he had heard. At the same time, many students felt strongly that the annex teachers had abdicated responsibility at the beginning of the school year and had not been strict enough.

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[45] Ausubel, David P. Theory and Problems of Adolescent Development. New York: Grune and Stratton, 1954.

This stage of development demands a flexible approach on the part of adults. Students are likely to respond most negatively to the teacher who presents material and expects it to be learned solely on the basis of his authority. Teachers in both minischools who adopted the most "power-oriented" stance with students had the most difficulty with them, (Sue---the science teacher---at the annex presented a good example of the type of adult and student-teacher interaction junior high school students need: her standards for behavior were clear and fair; she enforced them while at the same time she called the students by warm pet names and joked with them during the presentation of otherwise boring material.)

Importance of School

When the 210 students in the minischools responded in the Fall to the question concerning the most important thing in their lives, 36% at Jefferson and 15% at North mentioned things connected with school and getting an education. The other major category was family---with approximately 20% at each institution naming their family or members of it as the most important thing in their lives.

School appears to occupy an omnipresent status in the seventh-grader's life, particularly those seventh-graders who are in the regular junior high school as the Jefferson students were. The first few weeks of the normal junior high are spent in quickly and thoroughly assimilating the seventh-grader into the school routine. Consequently when Jefferson students were asked in October to respond to the lead "I am most happy when...", 63% of the students named something about school (e.g., being in a particular class, getting good grades, doing interesting homework, changing classes). An additional 13% held anti-school positions (I am most happy "when there is no school"), bringing the total of school-related responses to 76%! It is doubtful that for 76% of the seventh graders, something concerning school was their happiest experience, but there is little doubt that it was the most important. (The students at North, having little exposure to the regimentation of the junior high school, had far more diverse responses to this question---60% of the students responded with school concerns, of which 15% were negative.)

Concentration on the importance of school and education grew during the year. By the end of the year, 38% of the North students and 52% of the Jefferson students named school-related topics as the most important things in their lives. The number mentioning something connected with school as making them most happy grew in each minischool, though Jefferson students were consistently more school-conscious than North students.

In American education, the transition to junior high school represents the beginnings of the change to an adult ro[illegible]. The student is no longer expected to act like a child; he is expected to be more mature, to carry more responsibility. In both his eyes and the eyes of his teachers, he is moving toward maturity and the movement is very important.

Many students were very excited and somewhat nervous about the experience of entering junior high school; they realized its implications in their development toward adulthood. One student, when asked what he liked best about junior high, said, "It seems like you're more grown up than last year. Last year you didn't have that much homework. And sometimes you didn't have nothing but this year we have homework everyday."

Some students had constructed elaborate fantasies about what junior high school would be like. The fantasies were so strong and indelible that of the forty-five or so students interviewed a month after they had begun the seventh grade, all except five could reconstruct what they had expected junior high school to be. The following is one of the most detailed; the images are very concrete in focus but remarkable in clarity and strength:

> Karen: I expected that when you get in junior high school, like you don't go to all the same classes. You go to different classrooms, like. Everybody goes to different classrooms but you don't stay with the same persons.
>
> I thought when you have lunch it would be like a restaurant. I thought you'd have little booths where your friends can sit at and then you go up and tell them

> what you want and then they give you your change. I thought it would be like a restaurant with booths and everything. And sit anywhere you want.
>
> Writer: What did you think your classes were going to be like?
>
> Karen: I thought the classes were going to be bigger. I thought you wasn't going to have blackboards, like the teacher'll talk, but you just have to write what he talks about. And I thought you just take notes. I didn't know you was going to have a blackboard. I thought you was going to have very hard stuff that you never knew before. I thought you were going to have something you never even seen.
>
> Taped Interview
> Jefferson Student, Oct.'70

Many of the descriptions of what junior high school was expected to be like had overtones of real fear. In large, overcrowded urban junior high schools, the excitement of moving toward adulthood by leaving elementary school is lessened by a real and not unwarranted fear of being physically hurt, of being picked on or bullied by the older students, of being robbed or waylaid on the way to school. One student was so concerned about it he said,

> Thought it was going to be hard. I wished I'd be left down. Thought if you dropped a pencil, you would get suspended. Thought that the teachers be so mean, the principal be a dog. Thought the work be so hard, that kids be writing on the walls and smoking.

The preceding is an illustration of general anxiety. Other students spoke of rumors they had heard about the seventh-graders being beaten up, about big kids having gang fights in the school and throwing bottles. The move to seventh grade looms large on the scale of experiences of middle childhood; it is natural that rumors and tall tales are circulated to the uninitiated by those who have gone before. A lot of rumors had more than a kernel of truth to them; the following was written as an evaluation of the Jefferson minischool:

> I am not saying that it was Beautiful Because it wasn't. It was nice But most uncomfortable. I didn't like it when we went on the trip on the 23 trolley. I almost got killed on the way home Because the teachers had to get off at 52nd street and a handful of children had to get off at 56th st. and we had no protection and I got held-up by some Boys. That's what I don't like about the minischool.
>
> Written Statement
> Jefferson Student, May '71

Entering junior high school is much more a mark of social development than it is one of educational or cognitive achievement. When a sample of students at Jefferson were asked to identify what they liked best about school, eleven of twenty-one mentioned something non-academic about junior school: changing classes, being in the halls, having lockers and so forth. (Of course, North students could not mention those aspects of school, a fact many bitterly resented.) A recurring reason students gave for learning the most in a particular class was that the material was "new." One student, picking history as the class where she learned the most in the Fall, gave as her reason: "You learn a whole lot of stuff about different places---North America, South America. You don't learn that in elementary school." "Newness" is a concrete indication that one indeed has made the move upward socially, and all the trappings of junior high school are very important to the entering seventh-graders and further indices of his social growth: carrying lots of books, having different teachers, following a roster, having a locker.

Some aspects of the seventh graders' social and cognitive development made the minischool arrangement a particularly suitable one; other aspects created problems with any new or different kind of arrangement at this level. The next section attempts to portray both the positive benefits of the minischool organization for seventh-graders and the problems it creates.

Appropriateness of Minischool Model

Positive Aspects

Sense of Special Identification

One of the most obvious benefits of the minischool organization was the sense of separate identification it provided the students. While the seventh-grader looks forward to entering junior high school in terms of what it represents socially, he is understandably nervous about moving into a large, labyrinthian building with older, "wiser" students. Many students expressed a fear of getting lost, of not remembering locker numbers, of being crowded with other students---they said they were "nervous" before they came.

The minischool provided a smaller, more easily mastered organization. Because it was smaller, it gave the appearance of being warmer and more personally concerned with the students than the larger junior high school system was. The initial benefit of the minischool, particularly when it existed within the normal junior high school building, was the entree it provided into the junior high school world. The student had the comforting sense of being oriented first to a restricted group, from which he could move out to explore the rest of the school. This feeling was aided considerably by the fact that the minischool teachers at Jefferson, for example, were better prepared in the beginning than the rest of the school. Their rooms were ready; they had a sense of program and mission and must have conveyed to the students a secure sense of order.

After a few days, as the students relaxed more about being in junior high school, they became more impressed with the fact that they were in a special program. The importance of being in a special or unique program for the adolescent is recognized by both teachers and child development theorists; it provides at least a partial answer to the child's increased need for identity apart from that provided by his family. Mel in Jefferson said that "just the fact that he's a member of an organization," whether it did anything really special or not, is important to the child. The PAS consultant at Jefferson remarked on the students' reactions to the minischool:

> At the beginning of the year, I think the kids felt as though they were set aside; they were the miniteam. Their first idea was, I'm with a dumb group or something like that, but that wore off in a couple of weeks and the kids were going around talking about, "I'm in the miniteam," you know, "such and such a thing." It made them feel important; they didn't know what it was, but they just knew they weren't part of the regular seventh grade cycle.
>
> Taped interview
> March, 1971

Students felt they had been especially selected to be in the minischool and that this was a privilege. As one Jefferson student said, "The mini is nice to be. I've never been in a minischool before.

I've never been anything not even a secretary in any of my rooms. But now I am in the minischool and I am happy." Other students said they thought "it's a proud feeling to be in the minischool because no other school has this brilliant idea," and that it made them "feel important to be in such a school."

This sense of uniqueness and of being singled out for a special program worked initially at a disadvantage at North---the students felt they were being deprived of an important experience: attending junior high school. The annex students were in the unusual position of having been in a "special" program the year before and instead of feeling pleased and proud, they actually felt it was not "fair" that they should be in one for two years in a row. This feeling diminished during the year and the students came to appreciate and praise the special privileges being in their own building afforded them. When they went to the main building for their minors, they tended to stay together as a group and to stress their separate identification from the rest of North.

Close Relationship with Teachers

The discrete nature of the minischool offered another benefit as well: teachers were able to get to know all students in the minischool well on an individual basis. In a large school setting, teachers often feel helpless about being able to do anything for students even if they do get to know them well. In a team situation, teachers had ready access to the other major teachers who worked with the students and they had the feeling of group unity and strength if they wanted to make recommendations for a child.

Knowing children well brought with it a greater sense of responsibility. At Jefferson one minischool student was living in a foster home; he had become very attached to the minischool, feeling it was more a "home" to him than his foster home placement. It came to the team's attention that he was being moved to another placement and thus would change schools; the team prevailed on his social worker and his Jefferson counselor to allow him to continue at Jefferson though it meant providing carfare for him. This may seem like a small incident but it is important to realize that such arrangements would not have been attempted without the group support provided by the miniteam. North teachers learned to use insulin equipment for a diabetic child in the annex---since there was no nurse available for an emergency, the responsibility fell to the team. This sense of responsibility and close contact between teachers and students is not often found in large, anonymous junior high schools. As the North consultant said:

> By and large, they (the students) are happier here than they would be there. I think they have much more of a sense of security. I think they know that every teacher here knows them and if they have a problem they will often go to teachers and tell them of it and have no qualms about it at all, which I think they would have had in the other building.
>
> Taped interview
> May, 1971

Students were aware of a more caring attitude on the teachers' parts. One Jefferson student wrote: "I like the minischool very much this year because the teachers were nice. We did a lot of activities that made the minischool fun. The teachers tried hard to make us happy. They even gave us work that wasn't on our level."

When North students were interviewed at the end of the year about the program, all except two mentioned at some point in the interview the fact that the teachers were better and cared more about them at the annex. One student, reflecting on the fact that he thought the work got rougher as you moved up in grades and that the annex teachers had taught slowly so that everyone could learn, said: "This is one of the best school years we've ever had. You should have one nice year before going to the eighth grade where it's bad." Another listed as one of the good things about the annex, "Teachers can talk to you as individuals," while another explained that, "if something happens here we can come straight to the teachers---they have time to talk and keep track of the students."

Most teacher-student relationships in junior high school are based on power, not mutual respect. The teacher has the power; he allows the students to get as close to him as he wishes but he can resort to his more powerful position in the system should he need to. The minischool arrangement put teachers and students in closer contact with each other, particularly at an annex, and thus began to break down power-oriented relationships. Students got to know teachers well on a more personal basis, just as the teachers were getting to know the students.

Adolescence is the beginning of a period of detachment from adults; part of this detachment is reflected in increased criticism of adults. At the same time adolescents are stressing their independence from adults, they desperately need adults as models while they establish their own identities. Teachers who maintained the same relationship with students as the students' parents do, were not likely to be looked to as models or friends. One North annex student said that the best thing about school was the teachers because "teachers at the main building are old-fashioned; they teach in a more uncomfortable atmosphere. Here (at the annex) you can relax, you don't have to be uptight about everything." Another said that the "teachers are not really like you picture teachers, (at the annex) they're more like friends."

This closeness allowed a degree of freedom and independent behavior in students unheard of in the regular school program. The annex teachers could not retreat from the closeness; their program and building laid heavy stress on it. They and the students had to come to terms. Sue expressed her concern at the end of the year about what was going to happen to the students the next year because, she said, "our children feel they have the right to come and state their point." She said that she had spent some time talking to annex parents trying to get them to back their children up if incidents with teachers occurred the next year. She explained the main building teachers' attitudes toward student independence: "You know, teachers say this is great, I'd like to see it happen, that's fine...but not in my classroom, on the side. Anybody else's classroom but mine."

Jefferson teachers tended to use the increased closeness with students more for its disciplinary effects than for establishing mutual trust and respect. At the end of the year, Helen complained of laxness in her classroom; Mel and Elaine said they had been too easy on the students and would start off harder the next year. Part of the difficulty lay with the fact that though Jefferson teachers said they cared more about the minischool students, they never moved away from the power-oriented relationship with them. For example, Elaine in demonstrating the fact that the team teachers cared more about students, said:

> They know that the four of us care and are willing to work with them. And I know with this one girl in 7-12, we called her in after school on Friday---I couldn't stay long because I was getting picked up---and the girl wouldn't talk; she wouldn't say a word. And Helen and Steve waited around until 4:00 until she finally decided to open up her mouth and say something.
>
> Taped interview
> March, 1971

The close relationship and working more with the students was seen by the team members primarily as a means of getting the students to behave better.

Flexible Programming

Both the team and the sense of separate organization provided the impetus for more flexible programming so vital to the seventh-grader. The picture drawn earlier in this chapter was of students at many different levels cognitively. The normal junior high school program has a difficult time accommodating these discrepant maturational states in one classroom. (Reading level, the basis on which students are grouped in junior high school, is not an adequate gauge of cognitive maturity.) The team structure provided possible help in this area in several ways. On the most primitive level, teachers had the freedom to change a student's section. Since they all taught the same students, they could, as the Jefferson teachers did, compare notes on the child's behavior in each class and decide if placement in another section was warranted. Occasionally, the Jefferson team made such decisions not on an academic basis but from the standpoint of social maturity---would the child fit in more or feel more at ease in another section?

Another benefit the team structure provided was the support it gave teachers trying new curricular approaches. As was pointed out a few pages before, seventh-graders have an especially difficult time with verbal presentation of new material---they need more direct experience with the subject matter. Mel felt support from the rest of the team for using the fractions unit with his classes, an eminently satisfying curriculum unit since it provided direct experience with a theoretical subject area. The whole Jefferson team felt encouraged initially to try more small-group activities with their classes, to break the lock-step method of presenting and having students work with material in a large group.

On another level, teachers could, through the minischool organization, provide overlap between their classes. Students find the task of keeping seven classes separate in their minds almost impossibly difficult. The minischool provided a sense of logical interrelationship, at least between and within the major subject classes. Several students remarked on this aspect of the Jefferson minischool in the beginning of the year: "I like the minischool because it seems that all of my major subjects are combined. They teach us some of each subject and sometimes they try to teach us different kinds of math, English and history to make it fun," and another, "I like the way our four major subject teachers are teaching a little of the same thing. I like it because it keeps us all on the same track." This curricular overlap did not persist at Jefferson but one student at the end of the year still felt the teaching interaction was important: "All the teachers know each other so if you are confused in one thing that is in another teachers cadicory that teacher could tell the other teacher to tell you about it and help you in what ever you were confused about."

Of course, an advanced level of interaction was represented by the big-room program at North. There, many different levels of thinking could be encouraged within the same room because students worked on independent programs. The openness of the program and the building accommodated the different levels of emotional maturity as well; for those students whose attention span was very short, who could not be induced to sit still for the 45-50 minutes of a regular classroom, there was the freedom to move to different activities---in fact, to move to different rooms to work if need be. For other more mature students, the fact that they could work on something for a long time, at their own pace, was very important. These students praised the program because it "gave you more time, more time in classes. Teachers will excuse you to other teachers." Similarly, several said they liked the program because they could keep working after the bell rung. One student summed up her feelings this way:

> (The good thing about the annex is) we have the big room, we have more time and space to do work. We aren't shut in a room. We can stay after school. The teachers are willing to help us. It's better than the main building.

Interview
May, 1971

Problems

Minischool as Theoretical Organization

The concrete child has difficulty grasping the hypothetical or the theoretical; if there was nothing tangible to the minischool for him to identify and understand, he soon lost whatever tenuous grasp he had of the theoretical idea of the minischool. This was particularly apparent among the Jefferson student population where there was not even the physical arrangement of the rooms to lend credence to the minischool idea. (The North minischool was, of course, defined quite concretely by an entirely separate building.)

Jefferson students knew, because their teachers had told them, that they were in a special program and that this special program implied unity and separateness from the rest of the school. Yet little happened to support what the teachers said. The first concrete evidence of the minischool was their October activity on the roof where they saw the other minischool students for the first time and sang a minischool song. Many students believed that was the minischool; one student was asked in an interview with the writer in November if he liked the minischool, said that it was all right if you wanted to sing---he had it confused with being in a chorus. Others, when asked about the program, responded in terms of this one activity: "One thing I do not like about the minischool when you have to sit on a paper you will get dusty (on the roof). Why they do not clean up where the minischool meet."

The type of team organization Jefferson teachers planned is probably the most difficult for the concrete child to grasp: the cognitive interrelationship between the classes. (That is a verbal proposition, not a tangible one.) Those students whose thinking was at the formal operations level (or well into adolescence) could grasp the idea behind the Jefferson minischool:

> I've always liked to try new things and the minischool was one of them. At first I was wondering what it would be like. Now I know that it is a little more than a group that does things together. It's almost like a club except you learn and are taught things that are very important in our future.
>
> Jefferson Student
> Written Statement, May, 1971

Others continued to believe in the minischool, but with no objective data to determine what it was, they tended to cite what the teachers told them about it:

> I learned more being in the minischool. We learned things that other seventh grade classes never learned before. If we weren't in the miniteam we wouldn't learn that much. We are lucky to be in the minischool.
>
> Jefferson Student
> Written Statement, May, 1971

A few students at the end of the year could not remember what the minischool was; others tended to identify it with one or more particular activity: "The only thing I learned from the miniteam is about the city when we went on that trip." Still others felt "there is really no different from the miniteam and a regular section." After the first flush of excitement of being both in junior high and in a special program, many students lost the sense of separate identification when there was little to remind them of it. Teachers at Jefferson were able to bring order to their classrooms for the first few months by threatening expulsion from the mini-school; at the end of the year, those threats held little meaning for the students. Students appeared frustrated by the conflict between what they heard from teachers and what they experienced. Many of the students interviewed at the end of the year recommended that the minischool do more as a group, stating that a separate building would be preferable to the present arrangement because then, as one said, they "would know who all is in the minischool."

The separate building was certainly a concrete definition of separate identity for a minischool program. But even a unitary experience like the annex did not guarantee that the concrete child would grasp the essential idea behind the program:

> The annex is okay especially when we play games in classes and go outside to play. The (annex) is a little overcrowdead and there are not enough pencil sharpeners. And our coats are left on shelves and desks. Because we don't have any lockers the rooms usually get dirty fast. The annex is a little torn down and we should have lockers to put our books in. We should have water fountains to drink water...The annex should have bigger bathrooms. Maybe we should have better tables to eat lunch on. The teachers are doing a nice job with the children from the annex.
>
> Written Statement
> From North Yearbook
> North Student, May, 1971

Need for Traditional Experience. The move to junior high school is part of a general and recognized pattern for becoming an adolescent and then an adult in our society. The seventh grade program cannot appear *too* different in the students' eyes; if one's seventh-grade program is too remote from what others experience then perhaps it is an inferior method:

> When kids come into the seventh grade, I feel they want to be not only in some minischool but they want to be in junior high school. They've heard of it, they've gone through all the grades and now they've graduated elementary school and they don't want to be in another elementary school.
>
> Mel, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

The feeling of being denied a regular junior high school experience (and therefore initiation into adolescence) was intense during the first few months of the North program. Students, indeed, felt they were in another elementary school; rather than looking on the annex as being a prestigious experience, they felt they were being picked on unduly. Even in late November, when many students had become acclimated to the annex---and recognizing good qualities in the experience---approximately one-fourth of those interviewed stated they would rather have been at the main building and it's a bigger building--feels more like a junior high school instead of this little building."

Similarly, the *symbols*--carrying a lot of books, getting a lot of homework--which go along with the move to junior high become very important to students; they are proof positive for many students that they have become adolescents. Jefferson and North went through a minor crisis with their students when they tried to be innovative and not give books. Lack of books could be viewed by non-minischool children as evidence that the minischool students were dumb. Many Jefferson minischool students focused on this difference between them and the rest of the school as the only concrete, observable differentiation between being and not being in the minischool:

"I don't like many thing about the minischool like books. We are about the only four class that don't carry around book. I would like to carry all the books I can get," wrote one girl. Another student wrote:

> I think the minischool should do more things like make things and everything and carry books. We don't have any books and I don't think it is fare my sister thinks I am dom to because I do no have any books...and next year I don't want to be in the minischool because we don't have any books.
>
> Written statement,
> Jefferson student
> October, 1970

Other symbols the North students complained of not having were a nurse's office, clocks on the walls and different floors to their school building. North students were also very sensitive to the informal attire of their teachers. It should be recognized that students do not welcome innovations in teaching method and appearance with open arms but rather with suspicion. Appearance is very important to seventh graders in helping them define the limits of their world and each new experience. It was obvious that students felt uneasy in the beginning of the year with the fact that they were allowed to call teachers by their first names; many students quietly opted never to exercise this privilege but called the teachers by their last names all year.

Most North students made the adjustment in expectations of teacher behavior fairly easily and in fact came to appreciate their teachers as being "more modern." One student, however, never did resolve his different expectations for how teachers should dress; he was particularly upset by Hal's appearance and "rode" him about it all year. He told Hal that Hal could not teach him because Hal was not a teacher. Hal decided to prove to Kevin that he was the same teacher, with the same knowledge, regardless of his clothes. One day he came to school wearing his dressiest suit complete with a conservative shirt and tie. The kids scurried around him as he came through the door; they wanted to know if he had hit the numbers. As he stood in the hall, Kevin came up to him, stood in front of him for a few moments and then very seriously said, "You're my teacher now, Mr.__________."

CONCLUSION

CHANGE IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS: A REAL POSSIBILITY?

When the Pennsylvania Advancement School began in Philadelphia, it was charged with the role of "change agent" for the junior high schools. Immediately representatives from the school were met with the accusation that no one at PAS really knew what junior high schools were like in the city, that the reforms proposed were "idealistic" and "unworkable." Most PAS staff members shrugged off those statements as coming from entrenched school system people refusing to recognize the possibilities for change.

In retrospect, it is now clear that the Advancement School did not "know" about Philadelphia junior high schools; few outside those schools do. And despite the considerable knowledge PAS staff members have gained about junior high schools---over five frustrating and seldom-successful years---solutions to the problems still are not clear.

Those who know the junior high situation well are often too weary and in too much despair to propose alternatives; those who propose even tentative reforms based on their experiences find their proposals met with disinterest or outright rejection by a neglectful school system. And still those external to the problem offer glib generalities about change and creating "humane education" which cannot be effected.

To understand the experiences of the two minischools discussed in this report, one must be aware of the general condition of junior high schools in Philadelphia; without this knowledge, it is impossible to evaluate the relative success---or potential---of the minischool model as a means for improving the quality of education in those schools.

This last chapter consists of four related parts: an initial section which conveys a sense of the problems besetting Philadelphia junior high schools; an examination of the factors which impede change in those schools; a discussion of the Advancement School as an example of an external change agent; and finally an analysis of the minischool model as one approach to change in the junior high schools.

Pictures of the Junior High School

> And the junior high school, by almost unanimous agreement, is the wasteland---one is tempted to say cesspool---of American education.
>
> Charles Silberman
> Crisis in the Classroom[46]

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In the midst of tree-lined streets, thickly populated with row and semi-detached houses, stands(Allen)Junior High School, a modern-looking building despite its twenty-two year occupation of a large corner lot. Turning the corner to park, a visitor is offered a closer look at the building: A fenced-in "playground" of asphalt and splintered glass reminiscent of exercise yards seen in pictures of prisons; scrawled messages covering the side of the building in white, black and brown paint: "Kill the Pigs," "Turk," "Cornbread."

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[46] Silberman, Charles, Crisis in the Classroom. New York: Random House, 1970.

Looking for an entrance, the visitor approaches the side door; there are no handles on the doors. One does not enter this school except at the front door; there are handles on the inside in case of fire, but they have been sawed off on the outside to curb intruders. At the front of the building is a strip of grass perhaps four feet wide. To protect the grass, a seven-foot high fence has been erected. The gate in the fence is rusted and padlocked---no one has opened it in years. Perhaps in retaliation for the exclusion from the grass, neighbors or students have thrown paper cups and other debris over the sence.

The hallways inside (Allen) are dim, appearing darker in part because of the red-brown tile lining the walls, but mostly because of the lack of light; lights are missing or broken and spaced far apart. There is nothing to look at inside (Allen). Nothing. The halls encircle a courtyard. Although the original design of the school must have included some purpose for the courtyard, that purpose has been long-forgotten: the courtyard stands bleak in its concrete grayness, empty except for a coca-cola can and some assignment papers students have thrown there. There is nothing on the bulletin boards. The faint outlines of some construction paper letters can be seen from last year's display on one of them. The cork is crumbling and falling away; most of the bulletin boards are covered with graffiti.

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In Philadelphia, tens of thousands of students come to school like Allen (maybe a little better or a little worse) every day. In one city block in Philadelphia, a school complex enrolls nearly 4,000 children under the age of fourteen; over twenty-five hundred are in the junior high school, the rest in an elementary school. Philadelphia has emphasized large plants in its school building construction; junior high schools in the city had an average enrollment in 1970-71 of 1677 students---ten had over 2,000 students.

Even with such large institutions, most junior high schools are overcrowded, especially in the poorer areas. The principal of Vaux Junior High School reported that although his school had been equipped to handle 1,500 students, he now had 1,700 on roll and had been forced to turn away 700 at the beginning of the school year.[47] Some junior high schools have gone on split-session schedules with classes beginning at 8:00 for the first session and 12:00 for the second. (Split sessions, while enabling the schools to handle the large numbers of children in the area, create more problems than they solve---they release thousands of children during school hours in areas where parents are likely to work and thus cannot supervise them, freeing these children to invade elementary schools, to harass businesses in the area---looking for something to do.)

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Of crucial importance in these large institutions is order. Discipline. The Philadelphia School Board narrowly defeated a proposal to have police officers patrol the halls in the secondary schools. At one school visited by the writer, all the boys who came late were lined up in the hall in the morning; fifteen feet or so across from them, the vice-principal sat at a desk put in the hall for him. As teachers, students and visitors passed through, the vice-principal barked out each student's name, requesting an explanation for his lateness. If the student mumbled, out of fear or for lack of a good explanation, he was yelled at and made to repeat his excuse louder. This ritual occupied the first hour or so of the morning, indicating that it was more important for the student to stand there obediently waiting his turn than to be in the classes he was missing.

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[47] "Principal Admits Teachers at Vaux have 'Hard Time'" Philadelphia Tribune, February 29, 1972, p.l.

As a substitute for the policemen they do not have, schools rely on Non-Teaching-Assistants (NTAs) who patrol the halls, monitor the stairways and herd smokers out of the bathrooms. Vaux, for instance, has ten NTAs monitoring the six floors of the building, and the principal has said that "ten more are needed to maintain order."[48]

NTAs often carry long sticks with which they help direct traffic and discipline unruly or disobedient students. One NTA at Jefferson was witnessed by the writer wielding a wide leather belt; swinging it in front of him, he chased a seventh-grader into a classroom, a student loitering in the hallway before class. In front of the rest of the students, the student and the NTA came to stalemate, the student on one side of the teacher's desk out of reach, the NTA on the other side. Each was yelling and calling the other names, the student loud with fear, the NTA with anger. The tension was broken when the teacher entered the room.

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[48] *Ibid.*, p.1.

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Disciplinary strategies meet with little success; they are often piece-meal, with little forethought about the implications and with practically no regard for the students themselves. At Jefferson Junior High School, all the bathrooms are locked during lunch period. This policy was put into effect because of the amount of smoking and loitering occurring in the bathrooms during lunch. (The lunch "period" in these large institutions lasts from 10:45 until 1:30.)

Even though each lunch period is only thirty minutes, students often finish earlier; there is no place in the building for them to go. They cannot go outside, there is no empty classroom they can go to, and the bathrooms are locked. Consequently for more than two hours during the day, students wander in the halls outside ongoing classes. To prevent their opening doors and yelling at friends, locks were placed on the inside once class had begun.

One Jefferson minischool class was located next to the girls' bathroom and students gathered there daily. Unable to get into the bathroom, they rattled the door handle of the classroom. Frustrated one day at being denied access to both bathroom and classroom, a girl pulled the door knob off and threw it through the glass pane of the classroom door, sending long slivers of glass in a shower over the first several seats in the class. The knob itself missed a student's head by inches.

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> I've compared them /the students/ this year that they're like the highjacker. The plane wants to go to Los Angeles, but one person causes it to go to Havana even though everyone on the plane is doing the right thing. And (North) has been taken to Havana this year by the kids who start fires, the two kids who brought guns, the x-number who brought knives...the dozen or so who have been drunk. Because it's not just them; you can isolate that and come up with a beautiful statistic. It's the impact that they have, the word that goes around---the grapevine---about conditions.
>
> Principal, North Junior High
> Interview, June, 1971

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Gang problems riddle the schools in many areas of the city. Most schools in gang areas enroll students from at least two gangs, and often many more. Their presence is made evident through rival graffiti on the walls inside the school building. Often large groups gather outside the school near the end of the school day to challenge and do battle with each other. At closing time, the principal, vice-principals and NTAs of gang-ridden junior high schools place themselves in strategic locations to note signs of impending trouble. The writer left one junior high in the midst of such a confrontation: Police had blocked off the streets, patrol cars and paddy wagons were in the street and on the sidewalks; the huge crowd in front of the school building was being dispersed. As several students were being hustled into police cars, a student near the writer leaned over, picked up something quickly from the ground and passed near the writer, palming an eight-inch switchblade knife.

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The Philadelphia Inquirer of March 13, 1972 published an article about the institution of "safety corridors"---specially-patrolled approach streets---around a South Philadelphia junior high school. "Dismissal time is a little less nervewracking at Bartlett Junior High School since a safety corridor was instituted," the article began.

> Principal Anthony Giampetro said he sees the difference in the students' eyes.
>
> "They walk down the street and their eyes aren't darting from left to right waiting for the gangs to spring," he said. "If we can make it so they are not afraid to come to school, they will be a lot more receptive to learning."
>
> "Ordinarily kids coming from---say 3d st.---might use any of five east-west streets," Giametro explained. "We tell them to use only Christian st."
>
> At Bartlett, the principal, vice principals, three building security guards and non-teaching assistants station themselves along 11th st. and down Christian st. to 9th in the morning and at dismissal time at 3 P.M. Third district police also increase their patrols on Christian st. during these periods.
>
> Before the corridors were instituted, Giampetro said, the school was averaging about 70 percent attendance. This has risen to about 76 percent. Giampetro, who would like to extend the program, said he is pleased that he has finally come up with something to reduce the level of violence around Bartlett.
>
> "When we only patrolled the building, children were getting beaten up outside the building," Giampetro said. "When we just patrolled the pavement outside the building, students were in danger when they crossed the street."
>
> There have been no incidents in the last six weeks, and all involved are keeping their fingers crossed.

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At Cooke Junior High School, by February 1972 there had been five gang-related deaths among the student body in that school year alone, including one on the front steps of the building.

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A new Philadelphia high school opened in February, 1972, taking ninth-grade students from several junior high schools. It is estimated that there are about twenty-two different gangs represented in the high school student body.

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Tension is at a high level inside these building, for both students and teachers. At one junior high school, a teacher who had a history of abusive disciplinary treatment of his students was not fired because, the writer was told privately by the principal, he could not be replaced by a regular teacher, and a string of substitutes for the rest of the year would have created a worse situation. At least with this teacher, some students were learning something some of the time. With substitutes, few students would have learned anything.

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In Philadelphia in 1971, a junior high school teacher was shot to death by a student who had brought a gun to school after being disciplined by the teacher.

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Is any learning possible under these circumstances? Some, apparently, but not much. It appears that those students who enter junior high school reading at grade level or better continue to do well, a result perhaps of their class placement and whatever motivated them to have come so far in the first place. Other students lose ground. Overall in Philadelphia, students average 8/10ths of a year's gain for every year in school. That trend continues in junior high school, but the use of an average figure obscures the fact that many students are losing ground at a faster rate. By the end of the eighth grade the average student is two years behind national norms, statistically about 50 percent or more of Philadelphia's pupils.

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> Because adolescents are harder to "control" than younger children, secondary schools tend to be even more authoritarian and repressive than elementary schools; the values they transmit are the values of docility, passivity, conformity, and lack of trust. These unpleasant attributes might be tolerable if one could view them, so to speak, as the price to be paid for a "good education"---good, that is to say, in academic terms.
>
> Charles Silberman
> Crisis in the Classroom

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Factors Impeding Change

Lack of Concern and Interest

Junior high schools everywhere are a wasteland: little money, inadequate teacher training and few programs are geared specifically to them. In all of Charles Silberman's Crisis in the Classroom, there is not one exemplary project mentioned at the junior high school level. Junior high schools have been such failures that there is always a move afoot to do away with them, to create "middle schools" or "K-8" schools, as though changing the name would make the age go away.

One of the difficulties in bringing about change at this level is the protean nature of the junior high school age child. There exists an educational strategy for teaching the elementary school child, an educational strategy for teaching the high school student---but the junior high school student is a mixture of child and adolescent. He has been given a mixtur of teaching styles, and the amalgamation does not suit his particular needs.

Squeezed in between the other two forms of educating children, the junior high school acts as a way-station for children too old to be in elementary school and not yet mature enough for high school. Hardly anyone knows what to do with them, least of all teacher-training institutions. They are essentially forgotten until they must be reckoned with again after the ninth grade when they move on.

In Philadelphia, the concern for the junior high schools is certainly no greater than the national norm; if anything, Philadelphia junior high schools suffer from greater neglect than junior high schools elsewhere in the country. A striking indication of the low priority junior high schools receive in Philadelphia is in the allocation of Federal funds available to the city. Of the more than $41 million of Federal funds the Philadelphia School District received during the 1971 fiscal year, only $1,222,421, less than 3%, went to junior high school education. (And the Pennsylvania Advancement School received more than a third of that total, leaving less than 2% to be spent on the 32 junior high schools.) Senior high schools received three times the amount spent on junior highs, and elementary education (excluding Early Childhood Programs, for which specific funds are designated) was allocated more than six times the amount![49]

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[49] The remaining Federal money was allocated to Early Childhood Programs, Special Education, Community Education and Services, and Planning and Administration.

When there is money available, the schools often do not know what to spend it on. There is no coordinated effort to locate materials proven effective at the junior high school level (there are few such materials) and administrators are tempted to spend whatever special allotments they get on hardware: tape recorders, cameras, record players. At one school familiar to the writer, all the special money was spent on such equipment. There was friction on the staff about who should have control over the equipment purchased. One administrator had a plan but it was not in his "domain" to make such a decision. Finally, the equipment was locked away in a storage room "for protection" and neither students nor teachers received any benefit from it.

Principals Without Power

Principals in junior high schools are in a position such that even if they have a clear awareness of what is wrong and the steps necessary to right it, they are nearly powerless to do so. Junior high principals must bargain for everything they get: they must bargain---formally and informally---with the school district to get staff, to get substitutes (e.g., trading one vice-principal for several non-teaching assistants), to get supplies; and they must bargain with the teachers' union to enact changes within their own building. Teachers are highly aware of the lack of power in the principalship; they speak admiringly of principals who have "clout" or "pull" down at "21st Street"---school district headquarters. Those principals who were appointed by community boards or with Home and School Association participation have even less authority for they become answerable to yet a third interest group, an interest group whose only area of command is the principal's job.

The principal at Jefferson commented on his first year in the job. Although he admitted that he had spent "much too much" time on discipline, he contended that:

> In my first year I felt that there were certain things that I had to do to keep the school on an even keel so that we could move upward---I guess it's sort of like an airplane taking off. Before you take off, you have to get up your ground speed, and I call this the "ground-speed year." If I can get the confidence of the teachers in being able to handle problems like this /discipline/ without too much upset and any hurt to anybody, then people will sort of begin to do things my way. And then I can spend my time doing the kind of thing that has to be done to get the program off the ground.
>
> Taped Interview
> June, 1971

He felt that he had to win the teachers to his side before he could enact any changes, and the way to do it was to concentrate on what he knew was most important to teachers: discipline.

In a similar fashion, the principal of North "wooed" his teachers into accepting the annex plan (though it in no way directly affected any teacher in the main building) by giving them a new faculty room, three times the size of the old one. He was able to say to his faculty that by moving four classrooms to the annex, he had freed one room for the lounge, freed another room for a math lab, and moved most classes out of the auditorium.

Junior high school principals who are good at that kind of bargaining are more likely to run good junior high schools, "good" meaning well-managed. The further step of effecting programmatic changes is harder to accomplish. The North principal was very pleased with the end result of the North annex program; when asked if he thought the team or minischool approach could be used broadly in his school, he replied:

> You say would I like to do it with the whole school? If that means doing it by political fiat where the principal gets up and says, you know, we've demonstrated this and we think it's terrific. Even if I were a miracle man, an evangelist or somebody that could communicate this to an entire staff, as a practical matter I'm going to have at least twenty changes on my faculty when I open the doors in September. So I'm talking about twenty out of the seventy-five who'll be on my staff then...So when you say the whole building, I couldn't do the whole building if a miracle happened, you see, I don't have the people ready.
>
> Taped Interview
> June, 1971

The Power of the Teachers Union

The teachers' union, having begun by fighting against real inequities and for redress of honest grievances, has now become as entrenched as the school system. In junior high schools, adherence to the system the union has bargained for often replaces any substance in program. Because the union was formed for teachers, not for the students, it is reasonable to expect that its highest priorities would concern teachers' benefits and working conditions, not the quality of the educational program. However, it must be pointed out that many of the union's negotiated "rights" serve to perpetuate existing conditions, thereby impeding most efforts at significant reform.

Except for occasional days, junior high school teachers are not expected to remain in their schools after 3:00 without being paid overtime. (The current rate is $7.30/hour.) The Advancement School in its early years often met with faculties of various junior high schools. Those meetings, beginning at

2:30, were interrupted when half or more of the teachers stood up and walked out if the meeting went past 3:00. There is no time during the 9-3 working day for a whole-staff meeting to discuss new programs or new organizational arrangements. Nor is there sufficient time for smaller groups of teachers to meet to discuss ways of relating their respective classes. Union regulations, combined with the School District's financial bind, serve to preclude efforts to reconsider, and make substantial changes in the outmoded, boring and fragmentary program of most junior high schools.

The teacher's union has also bargained for and won the right to have no teacher rostered to more than three classes in a row. While that is a good general rule, it should not be enforced so stringently for those teachers who do not want it. For example, minischool teachers at Penn Treaty wanted to be rostered to teach four classes in a row. If all minischool teachers were rostered to that block of time, they could make changes within it, creating their own schedule with a flexibility the normal roster does not provide. The minischool teachers had to fight with the union to achieve the right to have that kind of roster.

Morale Problems--Nobody Wants to be There

> You can see by the way the teachers teach the classes that they don't really give a damn what they say in the classroom or what they do. It's forty minutes, and when they get done the next class comes in, and after this happens five times they go home. And after ten days of doing this, they get paid.
>
> Steve, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

It is generally unrewarding to try to teach or learn in junior high schools. The feeling that you are in a forgotten wasteland permeates the building. Students who came in fresh and eager in the seventh grade become despondent, bitter and unreachable by Christmas. Teachers fresh from student teaching, anxious and excited about their first job, soon learn to "start off hard" and use the stick a lot.

Hal at North summed up his feelings of despair about teaching in junior high school, the reasons he had volunteered to teach in the annex:

> That's everybody's big thing---to get something down so that you don't have to follow the regular roster and do the teaching like everyone else does. I mean that's true. That's what junior high school is; I don't know about elementary or senior high school, but in junior high school everybody's trying to get out of stuff---the kids, the teachers.
>
> The Annex has been a lot of extra responsibility. I've spent more time working this year, more time preparing than ever and I've had more close relationships with kids and I've worried more about their worries than ever before. In the main building the big thing is to let someone else do it if possible, to get out of doing as much stuff as you can, because there's seventy-nine others to do things. And what the hell, if one person can somehow get out of some responsibility, that's fine.
>
> But here, you can't do it because somebody knows right away you're not participating---one of the other teachers will notice.
>
> Hal, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

It is not surprising, then, that teacher turnover is highest in the junior high schools. In a New York Times article in May 1971, Albert Shenker, President of the Teachers' Union in New York City, made the following comment about teaching in junior high schools:

> The junior high schools have long suffered from staffing problems. Teachers who are subject-matter oriented tend to prefer teaching their subjects at the highest level, the high school; while teachers who are "child-oriented" tend to prefer elementary grades. As a result, junior high schools across the country are staffed, by teachers who are waiting for the opportunity to go to one of the other two divisions.

As of April, 1971 there were four junior high schools in Philadelphia in which more than 50% of the faculty had less than two years' experience. At one school, discussed in the Philadelphia Tribune article referred to previously, the principal pointed to his large turnover rate---26% of his regular teachers had less than two years' experience---as one of the major problems in the school. A previous principal of that school, in a letter to the Philadelphia School administration in June, 1969, stated the problem in the following way:

> As of June 30th, the vacancy condition at Vaux reads: (1) vice principal, (3) counsellors, (25) teachers. Twenty-six of these vacancies were created by the turnover of provisional teachers appointed between September 1968 and April 1969.
>
> This is a repeat of a turnover pattern of many years. We have been indulging a parade of visitors at the expense of children....

Further data on the staffing conditions of junior high schools are provided by teacher salary figures for the 1971-72 school year. The salaries reflect a combination of years-of-experience and amount-of-training (Bachelors degree, Masters, etc.). Consequently, the higher salary figures indicate that the teachers have more experience and/or more training. Following is a table listing the average salary for teachers in each of the four major subject areas at both the junior high and senior high school levels.

	Senior High	Junior High	Difference
English	$13,220	$12,178	$1,042
Math	$13,169	$12,046	$1,123
Science	$13,797	$12,905	$ 875
Social Studies	$14,203	$12,775	$1,428

TABLE XI
AVERAGE SALARIES OF TEACHERS BY SUBJECT AREA IN JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

The average of the four areas is $13,597 for senior high school teachers and $12,476 for junior high school teachers, a difference of $1,121. Nor is the difference merely a function of higher grade level: the average salary for elementary school teachers (grades 1-6) in Philadelphia is $12,657, almost $200 higher than the junior high figure. Even kindergarten teachers have a higher average salary (#13,017) than junior high school teachers!

In sum, then, one must conclude that junior high schools in Philadelphia are largely unappealing places---for both teachers and students---and that little has been, or is being done by the School District Administration to deal with the conditions which plague them. The role of the Pennsylvania Advancement School must be considered in the context of this history of neglect and indifference.

Pennsylvania Advancement School: External Change Agent

What Does it Know?

Personnel from external projects or agencies must take care to avoid looking like junior high school teachers who "got out of" teaching. Junior high schools are deluged with visits from consultants in various subject areas from art to social studies, consultants who everyone knows do not have to stay, consultants who can go back to their offices at the district office or downtown.

Anyone external to the situation is open to the accusation of not really understanding the problem. In many cases this is true. And both sides have reasons for maintaining this state of non-understanding: the external agent because to know the extent of the problems would make his job overwhelming and practically impossible; the junior high school personnel because changing is more work than remaining the same---even though the situation is nearly intolerable.

In addition, while the external agent is very self-involved in whatever it is offering the school, from the point of view of the junior high school, it is only one project among many. Aside from the regular school district personnel (the subject matter consultants) who visit, there are at least two or three university-connected and/or federally-funded projects vying for teachers' and the principal's attention in each junior high. These projects often remain blissfully unaware of each other's existence until one loses students, teachers or classroom space to another. These efforts generally are not coordinated and no one even seems to care if they are working toward the same end. The effect of this uncoordinated hodge-podge of projects and consultants is to negate the power of all of them. None really makes a dent in the ongoing junior high program; none ever wins the commitment of more than three or four of the teachers.

Added on to those general problems, the Advancement School was an external agent facing specific difficulties peculiar to it. It had a radical reputation preceding it into every school; therefore, people were suspicious and unreceptive before PAS had even made a proposal. And it was a conspicuous project. While it was arguing for radical change in junior high schools, PAS did not "suffer" much: it had carpeted floors, a favorable student-teacher ratio and lots of money to spend on equipment. No matter that some of this was necessary and unavoidable, to junior high school personnel it looked luxurious and irrelevant to their situation. Coming from that setting, proposals by committed, articulate and long-haired staff created bitter reactions and often an unwillingness to cooperate.

The Advancement School had no real experience to offer the schools it was working with, and those schools had no time to let the project learn about the problems at their expense. PAS had no experience, and no power at 21st Street where it counted. The School could not back up its proposals with support from downtown; it could win converts only by its power of persuasion.

What Can it Offer?

For junior high schools the crucial question (if anyone had time to ask it) is, what can an external project or agent do for me? External agents act sometimes as if their very presence was a God-send, not realizing their contribution to the confusion already rampant in the schools. To the harried principal or vice-principal they become something else to deal with, to accommodate, valued chiefly if they do not interfere with anything else.

Many junior high school principals spend their days handling discipline problems the way the Jefferson principal did. To take care of discipline in a school the size of Jefferson, the principal estimates he needs three vice-principals, a disciplinarian and several NTAs. Jefferson was missing a third vice-principal and therefore, the principal felt that he had to fill the vacuum: taking away jackets from students who had not put them in their lockers (hiding places for guns or other weapons), chasing kids from the fire towers where they were smoking, and rounding up unwelcome "visitors" (high school students on split shifts, suspended students, drunk students).

In the midst of these concerns, the principal does not have time to think of the larger issues confronting his school. He does not have time to visit classrooms and check on the quality of teaching in more than a superficial manner. He has neither time nor motivation to play around with his roster for possible new arrangements. External projects like PAS represent long-range ideas; they do not bring help or information principals can make immediate use of. If these programs really could bring about the changes in the schools which they promise and wax philosophical about, then they would be useful to the school administration. But the principal has no time to think about those possibilities, and most of these projects are so fresh and untried they cannot guarantee results anyway.

Aside from philosophical commitment to working in junior high schools (though perhaps not with problems the junior highs were concerned with most), what else could an external agent like PAS bring in its dowry for the junior high school? Very little. It could offer to pay the summer salaries for a few teachers; it provided one administrator for one elementary school annex. It provided a little money ($100.00) to be used by the teams it worked with; and it could pay a few teachers overtime to meet together on some Saturdays. The North principal originally became interested in PAS because he thought it would offer him an administrator which he sorely needed. PAS did not have the wherewithall to offer that much. It could offer curricular materials developed by its staff, but they had to be accompanied by time spent teaching teachers to use them and getting their commitment to try.

PAS's goal was to call on the resources which existed within the schools, to teach them how to bring about change in their schools, not to tell them what change was necessary. It underestimated the extent of the problem and the resistance to, and pessimism about change. It is likely that most external projects working in the schools suffer from the same problems.

Who Wants it?

> I think that any new program that tends to isolate itself, either imagined or real, would draw some askance looks, if you will. But I don't think that anyone really fears them /the minischools/. One of the things we said initially was that any teacher who's interested can come in and just sit down and look. Anytime you feel as though you would like to come in and look, you're more than welcome.
>
> Principal, Jefferson
> Taped Interview, June, 1971

One of the biggest obstacles to change any outside agency must contend with in junior high schools is resistance of the faculty. This resistance can be felt in subtle, often unanticipated ways: from teachers making remarks about the "mini-circus" when the Jefferson team changed the seating arrangement in one class, to insisting that the North teachers mark all their gradebooks at the main building instead of being allowed to take their sections' rollbooks to the annex to work on; from policing the minischool tables with extra scrutiny in the lunchroom to teachers making disparaging remarks loud enough for the minischool students to hear as they passed through the hall. Much of the resistance is petty and mean, coming from teachers who are in no obvious way threatened by the program.

After being involved in such attempts for a number of years and in these two minischools for a full year, the writer has concluded that it is the threat of change rather than the substance which leads to the resistance. At Jefferson, the team conformed so much to what was required in the larger school that there was virtually no experimental program; yet at the end of the year, the team had to contend with other teachers talking about them in the faculty lounge, discouraging a counselor from joining the team, and other vindictive actions.[50]

It would appear that the situation is so bad in most schools and appears so hopeless, that both teachers and students are trapped into patterns of behavior they neither admire nor can change, that an outside agent breezily talking about change only engenders anger. The frustration which has arisen because of the situation has no other outlet, and thus gets directed to the ones who suggest change.

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[50] The phenomenon described might be termed a "reverse halo-effect": throughout the year some of the regular Jefferson teachers commented critically about aspects of "the experiment," even though nothing of substance had been changed! Their predisposition to be negative about the Advancement School---and innovative programs generally---resulted in their "seeing" things which were in no way attributable to the minischool program.

The principal of North used great care in introducing the idea of the annex to his faculty in September so as not to arouse their hostility:

> I said to the faculty: the annex program is not a conspiracy to get you to change, it is not a wild-eyed experiment, I said these are four of your colleagues who have volunteered to try some ideas. No one in this building is under any directive from me to teach the way they are, nor are the teachers in the annex being ordered to teach the way the people they met with at PAS taught this summer.
>
> Taped Interview
> October, 1970

Those faculty likely to be interested in new programs are the younger, newer faculty, those who have not settled down to one system yet. But it is among that group that turnover is the highest. Out of 83 teachers who attended a PAS summer program in 1968, only 51 were still teaching in their schools at the beginning of the 1970-71 school year. This number becomes more significant when one remembers that the 81 were not a representative sample of the faculties, but rather the ones who were willing and anxious to try new approaches. There is hardly a stable group with which an agency like PAS can establish a relationship and work toward change.

Minischools: Examples of Change

In-House Change Agent

One of the more successful of the Advancement School projects has been its work with minischool teams. Over the years, the program naturally evolved to have this kind of focus: teams of teachers who planned together in the summer and carried out their plans during the school year with some Advancement School help. The initial optimism which greeted this focus has now diminished somewhat, and the School is better able to view minischools, with Jefferson and North as prime examples, realistically.

The idea that change in a junior high school will come by osmosis, through a process of generalizing from an exemplary project to the rest of the school, must be discarded. Minischools were initiated with the idea that a well-run team would provide impetus to the rest of the school to change, that the minischool provided entree into the larger institution and represented a step on the way to other goals. That point of view was summed up well in the following statement by Steve of Jefferson:

> Hopefully, we'll influence some teaching methods in the school, which would be nice. A lot of it's too establishment-type teaching. On the other hand, new teachers that are coming in, if they could be brought within the larger team framework, say in 7th grade next year and we /the team/ move up with our 8th grade to 9th after next year and have them move with their 8th's and the new teachers take 7th and eventually have about 12 teachers on it; 12 out of 83 makes a significant difference.
>
> Taped Interview
> October, 1970

Most of the ideas and goals for osmotic changes were not that modest. There are three major flaws in such reasoning:

One, it fails to understand that a principal's commitment to a minischool did not involve any broader commitment to whole-school organizational or curricula reform. Principals could and did com to PAS and agreed to institute one or two minischools---without any intention of implementing further change in their schools. Many principals chose a minischool just as they would choose another curriculum or another reading program. To PAS the commitment implied was much greater than that intended by the principals.

Two, minischools were tolerated best which did not require adjustments in the larger institution. They had administration support as long as they were not asking for anything out of the ordinary---but significant change is out of the ordinary and requires more work. The annex was left to its own devices without vice-principal or counselor. It often got snide remarks, but the only complaints came when annex teachers requested unusual help (such as taking the grade books out of the room where they were kept). At Jefferson, there was no doubt that the team was a lower priority:

> They [the administration] think it's nice; they kind of like us, but they like us to the extent that we conform to the basic rules of the rest of the school. One day she [the vice-principal] came up here and said, "I've been very patient with this minischool thing, you know." That's what she said to me, which means there's been other times, probably, when she would have liked to tell us all to shove it and she didn't.
>
> Taped Interview
> June, 1971

Three, for change to generalize, the concept of minischools must be aggressively introduced to the rest of the school. A whole tempo for change and movement must be established from the principal (or perhaps the district superintendent) on down. Teachers cannot be expected on their own to seek out the minischool team members and learn about new approaches. They will not do it. At the beginning of the year the principal of North took this tack when he talked to his faculty. He told them:

> I want every one of you to feel free at any time to visit---I know the four teachers there will welcome it---and you might have some suggestions for them of ideas you would like them to try out. You may see something they're doing that you'd like to try.
>
> Taped Interview
> October, 1970

For a real interchange to take place between team members and the rest of the faculty, the idea must be pushed more determinedly and in a systematic way.

At the end of the year the Jefferson principal had lost much of his enthusiasm for change on a larger scale. At the beginning he had spoken of turning his whole school into minischools, with every teacher on one. At the end, he spoke of the team as a "curriculum" and "developmental" group. And he said that "if the teachers who are outside look at the successes they are having, then they can sort of cull from it and use it in their classrooms." It has been pretty well proven now that such a strategy does not work, that resistance is too entrenched to break down under such gentle prodding.

Future Possibilities

Neither of the teams described in this report can be called a success. The Jefferson team began the year with an unambitious and ill-defined program, with no real commitment by the members to the team, housed inside the building with little control over its situation. It ended the year in pretty much the same situation.

The North team had its share of problems but it continued moving, and the direction in which it was moving seemed a promising one for minischools. Within the North situation, there was at least the possibility for finding the right approaches for teaching the junior high school child. Within the Jefferson situation there was no such possibility.

Certainly a great deal of the difference between the two teams lay in their dissimilar physical situations. The annex setting allowed more flexibility, more independence from the constraints and concerns of the main building, and a sort of "sink or swim" finality which forced the teachers to come to grips with problems. The Jefferson teachers never faced such a test. For them the team was a construct, a hypothetical entity, to be called on when needed, especially in times of disciplinary trouble.

It is difficult for teachers to feel responsible and committed when they are so clearly aware of their lack of independence, of their powerlessness in both the junior high school and the total school system. Breaking that system down into smaller units personalizes the job, it makes it real and meaningful:

> It's our school. As far as responsibilities go, I mean we handle everything. Last year I didn't even have a homeroom...I had to go back and review all the forms, business things and so forth. But not only that, any problem that comes up, either disciplinary or medical or anything, we handle it. If the window's broken we have to take care of it; if somebody comes in from outside and wants to visit, we have to take care of it; the district superintendent pops in, we have to be gracious. Just any of a million things.
>
> Mike, Taped Interview
> March, 1971

Although neither of these teams represents the absolute answer to the problems besetting the junior high school, it would appear that the minischool idea is a promising alternative to the present junior high school structure. It is an arrangement which allows for more control over program, both content and overall philosophy. It forces teachers into taking responsibility for areas where they have abandoned it. It makes teachers more likely to think in terms of the quality of education they are providing and is a small enough unit so that the program can be changed periodically to be more in line with the needs of the teachers and students. Neither teachers nor students are allowed the anonymity which cloak non-teaching and non-learning in the larger system. It would seem with such a structure that control over discipline, especially the types of discipline meted out, is much more a possibility.

The minischool idea has just begun to be explored and its possibilities have not been adequately tested in either of the two teams described here. In the future, minischools need to concentrate less on philosophy and more on basic teaching skills and basic knowledge. To be avoided is a situation such as North's where the team spent so much time arguing over philosophy and general approach, there was little awareness of the fact that two of the four teachers were teaching very bad classes.

Before the school year begins, minischool teachers must have a clear idea what they are going to teach and what they will fall back on if that does not work. Such materials should have been gathered on the basis of some knowledge of the junior high school age child, admittedly a difficult child to teach. (Likewise minischools are probably not good places for first-year teachers unless they receive a great deal of help: inexperienced teachers generally do not know children of this age well enough---nor have they mastered basic techniques of classroom organization and control---to plan and carry out an effective instructional program.)

The minischool structure carries within it the possibilities for many different approaches with students---that is one of its greatest values. The rigidity of the larger system no longer need hold. If the planning and work is based on a commitment by teachers to the team, if some time is provided for teams to work together to formulate plans, and their freedom is guaranteed once the school year begins, minischools may begin to fulfill their promise: a humane alternative to the junior high school wasteland.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DATA COLLECTED

Research Design

The following design was devised to enable one person working half-time to collect as much useful information as possible about the operations of two teams of teachers in the 1970 Advancement School summer program. It was felt that both "soft" and "hard" data were necessary for any complete documentation of team experience in the fall. A plan for the collection of data was devised in the summer of 1970 in collaboration with the Director of Research and Planning and the External Coordinator for the Advancement School. The plans were cleared with the principals of both schools involved, and required that the writer visit each school team once a week during the school year. During these visits the following data were collected:

1. INTERVIEWS

Teachers: Teachers were interviewed three times during the year, each interview lasting from thirty minutes to an hour.

Pre Interview (conducted the end of October, beginning of November):

What were your expectations in the summer about working on teams?
How have expectations changed with the beginning of the school year?
How well is the team working together?
What do students feel about being in a team?
What is consultant's role with team?
How do you personally feel as member of team?
  As compared to last year?
  In the eyes of the faculty?
What is your definition of "team" in the junior high school?
  How much can a team really do in the junior high school?

Mid Interview (conducted the beginning of March)

Are any effects from the summer planning still being felt?
How does the team stand in relation to the rest of school faculty?
  How are you regarded? What is your reputation, if any?
What do you see now as the potential of minischool organization in the junior high school? Weaknesses and strengths?
How far has your team come towards realizing its potential?
Do students still feel different being in a minischool?
  What do you notice different in their behavior or attitudes?
How do you feel different as a teacher being part of team?
  What, if anything are you doing differently?
What direction would you like the team to go in for rest of year?

Post Interview (conducted the end of May, beginning of June)

What difference overall has being a member of the team made for you? Difference between this year and last?
What could the team have done during the year that it did not do? How far has it come toward realizing potential?
How realistic were team's plans from the summer?
If you had it to do all over again, what would you do with the summer of 1970? What summer would you plan for a new team?
How helpful has PAS been to you this year? How could it have been more helpful? Has it helped to feel part of PAS network of minischools?
What effects do you think the minischool has had on the rest of the school? On the administration? Other faculty?
What ways are minischool students different from the way you think they would have been in normal roster?

Principals: Each principal was interviewed twice during the year, each interview lasting between forty-five minutes and an hour and a half.

Pre Interview (conducted the end of October, beginning of November)

What were your expectations for the summer program at PAS?
Where do you think the team is now in carrying out plans?

- What is the value for a principal in having a team of teachers rostered together?
- How do you think students feel being part of minischool?
- Have you had any reactions from parents?
- Have you had any reactions from other faculty?
- What do you think consultant's role should be with team?
- Is a consultant really necessary to team functioning?
- How might team approach affect the rest of the school, if at all?

Post Interview (conducted the end of May, beginning of June)

- How would you assess the effectiveness of the minischool program this year?
  - In terms of instructional program for students?
  - In terms of teachers: how well have they worked together?
  - How have they handled problems? How inventive have they been?
  - (What do you think team has done in each area? How could it have done more or better?)
- What is the effect of minischool on the rest of the school?
  - Administration, faculty, students?
- What have the reactions of the parents been to minischool?
  - What are team contacts with parents?
- How realistic do you think the summer plans were?
  - How could the summer be improved?
- How effective a help has PAS been to team and you during the year?
- What are the major problems of a junior high school?
- Have you thought of having your whole school organized into minischools? What would it entail to do that?
  - What problems would that address in the junior high?
- What problems would it not address?

Students:

Unstructured Interviews: Six students were interviewed from each minischool in October, the interviews lasting from twenty minutes to half an hour. Data from these interviews were used in devising and testing the questions to be used in the Structured Interviews.

Structured Interviews: Pre and Post interviews with a randomly selected group of students at each minischool.

Sample:	North		Jefferson	
Pre	11 boys	10 girls	12 boys	10 girls
Post	10½* boys	8 girls	12 boys	9 girls
Losses	*Student refused to complete interview half way through. Two girls had transferred to main building.		One girl refused to be interviewed again.	

Interview format: Questions were posed by the writer to the students who were encouraged to give a full answer. Their answers were recorded as completely as possible on the interview schedule sheet. Each interview took from twenty to forty minutes.

Questions:

Pre and Post:

- What did (do) you like best about school this year? Why?
- What did (do) you like least about school this year? Why?
- In what class did (do) you feel you learned the most? Why?
- In what class did (do) you feel you learned the least? Why?
- In what class did (do) you have the most fun? Why?
- Are you glad you were in the minischool this year? Why?
- What are the good things about being in the minischool?
- What are the bad things about being in the minischool?
- Would you like to be in a minischool next year? Why?
- Is it better for the minischool to have a separate building of its own or to be inside the regular school building?
- Are your grades better or worse than you expected this year? Why?

Pre form only:

- Thinking back to last year, can you remember what you expected junior high school to be like?
- In what ways has this year been like what you expected?

Post form only:

- Do other kids seem to know about the minischool (annex)?
  - What do they think?
  - Do teachers seem to know about it? What do they think?
- Is a minischool a good arrangement for 7th graders?
  - Would you recommend the minischool to a sixth grader just coming in to 7th grade? Why?
- Do you think the minischool is a good arrangement for 8th graders?
- Do you feel you are prepared for the eighth grade?

2. SENTENCE COMPLETIONS

Sentence stems for which students were asked to provide an ending, administered pre and post in a regular classroom period.

Sample:

North

	Girls		Boys		Total	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
7-12*	15	10	14	8	29	18
7-13	14	13	13	13	27	26
7-14	13	14	11	4	24	18
7-15	15	17	9	11	24	28
	57	54	47	36	104	90

Plus 3 additional returns which could not be analyzed: turned blank in with names

Jefferson

	Girls		Boys		Total	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
7-2**	18	16	15	13	33	29
7-5	16	13	19	13	35	27 (1 with no name)
7-9	20	17	13	9	33	26
7-8	14	12	10	11	24	25 (2 with no names)
7-12	13	5	16	8	29	13
	81	63	73	54	154	120

Instrument:
Twelve sentence stems administered pre and post.

So far, I think the (North/Jefferson) minischool has been
I am most happy when
I am always sad when
My favorite school subject is
Most teachers
I love people when they
I don't trust people when they
Teachers should
The most important thing in my life
I wonder if
I become angry when
A friend is

---

*Students heterogeneously grouped into sections.

**Students homogeneously grouped into sections. Arranged here in order of tested ability with 7-2 testing highest, 7-12 lowest.

3. GATES-MCGINITY READING TEST

The Gates-McGinity Reading Test, Intermediate Form, was administered to both minischools. The pretest was given in October and the posttest was administered in May. Unfortunately, it was impossible to make the necessary arrangements for giving the test to appropriate control groups in both schools.

4. TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRES

Quarterly questionnaire: Administered to all teachers in the Advancement School external program in November to assess how well the summer planning was being put into effect and to uncover any problems teacher felt they were having.

Bi-Weekly Checklist: Administered every two weeks for the period December to April by the writer to the two minischools involved in this report.

Questions:

Please rank on a 1 to 7 scale (1 is low, 7 is high) how well you feel the team has been functioning the past two weeks._____ Please explain:

Please rank on a 1 to 7 scale the amount of interdisciplinary planning and implementation the team has been involved in during the past two weeks._____ Please explain:

Please rank on a 1 to 7 scale how well your individual classes have gone these past two weeks._____ Please explain:

How close during the past two weeks have you come to your goal of working with: Parents_____ Faculty_____ Please explain:

What activities did you try with kids during the past two weeks that were a specific outgrowth of the minischool structure? (These may or may not include interdisciplinary activities.)

5. CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Unstructured: The writer visited all the minischool classrooms at least twice during the early fall and made extensive notes of her observations. Noted were teacher behavior, student behavior, the content of the lesson and the approximate percentage of students involved in the lesson. These notations were made every three minutes. The writer revisited each class in early December and again in late March and the same notations were made each time.

Systematic Observations: With the aide of a trained observer in the Flanders System of Interaction Analysis, systematic observations were taken of each minischool teacher in January and February.

Each teacher was observed twice with two different sections of students for a total of four times. The sections selected were chosen as representative of the minischool as a whole. Since teams at North were heterogeneously grouped, two were chosen at random. Jefferson teams were homogeneously grouped; therefore two "middle" sections were chosen as a more representative sample of teaching behaviors than either the top or bottom group would elicit.

The Flanders system cannot be explained in detail here. It consists of ten categories for scoring teacher and student verbal behavior. A category is scored every three seconds for twenty minutes of class time. Generally the observer allows time to become acclimated to the classroom situation (from five to ten minutes) before he begins recording. After recording for 20 minutes, the observer makes written observations of the classroom activity to enable him to analyze his systematic observations more fully.

For a more complete description of the categories and the scoring procedure, the reader is referred to: Amidon, Edmund J. and Flanders, Ned. The Role of the Teacher in the Classroom: A Manual for Understanding and Improving Teacher Classroom Behavior. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Association for Productive Teaching, Inc., 1967.

6. MEETING OBSERVATIONS

The writer attempted to observe every meeting of both teams. Meetings were generally held once a week (those occasional meetings held on days the writer did not work for the Advancement School were almost never observed). With a few exceptions, the writer visited every normally-scheduled meeting from September through May for both teams. From these meetings emerged several pieces of data:

Meeting Minutes: The content of each meeting was recorded with special note of each change of topic and who introduced the new topic. Also recorded was the time spent on each topic.

Meeting Summaries: After the meeting, the minutes were analyzed by the writer and categorized into the general topics which were discussed at the meeting, the amount of time spent altogether on each topic, the person who introduced the topic and the resolution of the topic (whether or not a decision was reached). These summaries were later analyzed categorically so that topics were placed into broader categories. In this way the two teams could be compared on the basis of the percentage of meeting time spent in broad, disparate categories comparable to both.

Observational Summaries: Following each meeting (except especially short ones) the writer noted her observations of a more general nature, including General Reactions, Type of Interaction/Leadership, Positive Aspects (of the meeting) and Interferences/Problems/Hindrances.

Who-to-Whom Observations: In an attempt to assess systematically leadership patterns, who-to-whom observations were taken by the writer at the team meetings she visited in April and May. These observations were made for twenty minutes of the meeting time and were only conducted when a full complement of team members were present and it appeared to be a normal meeting. Such observations attempt to assess leadership patterns through noting who talks to whom at the meeting.

7. TAPED AND WRITTEN OBSERVATIONS

At various times during the year, the writer attempted to summarize the progress of the teams to that point, her reactions to the developments within each team, and other more general information not being garnered by another source. These observations were sometimes written but most often taped and then transcribed.

An additional set of observations is provided by the Flander's observer. Her notes of classes observed in January and February were typed.

8. MISCELLANEOUS DATA

Written account of early involvement with North and Jeffferson: Joseph Prusan, who left the Advancement School in August, 1970, had been Director of the External Program when the School initially became involved with North and Jefferson. This year he provided a written description of that early involvement.

Absence Information: Both North and Jefferson freely provided the writer the data comparing the absenteeism of the mini-school sections with the absentee rate of the other seventh grade classes.

Student Reactions: At various times both North and Jefferson teachers asked students in the minischools to write their reactions/assessments/criticisms of the program. These papers were generously collected and given to the writer by the teachers in each team.

Other Material: The writer tried as much as possible to obtain copies of every memorandum or report written by each team during the year.

Iowa Scores: The writer was able to obtain copies of the 1970 and 1971 Iowa Test scores of the entire seventh-grades at North and Jefferson. The improvement of the minischool/annex students during their seventh-grade experience could thereby be compared to the improvement of other seventh-graders in their respective schools.

Statistics on North and Jefferson: Information on the racial composition of the students and staff at North and Jefferson were gathered from two annual publications of the School District's Office of Research and Evaluation: Summary of

Personnel in the Philadelphia Public Schools; and Enrollment of Negro and Spanish Speaking Students in the Philadelphia Public Schools. Other statistical data used in Chapter One were gathered from records in the School District's Management Information Center, Room 215 in the Administration Building.

APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL LITERATURE ON THE ADVANCEMENT SCHOOL'S EXTERNAL PROGRAM

(available from the Advancement School)

Report on the 1968 Summer Workshop
External Staff Development, 1968-69
Saturday Workshop Report
1969 Counseling Summer Program
Participants' Reactions to the 1969 Summer Program
Summer '70: Report on the 1970 Summer Workshops
Update on PAS
Summary Report on the External Programs of
    the Pennsylvania Advancement School, 1968-1971
    (in preparation)

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